



Aalborg Universitet

AALBORG UNIVERSITY
DENMARK

The case of agroecology in the agricultural and rural policy in Europe A social-constructivist approach under the Winston Smith condition

López i Gelats, Feliu

Publication date:
1998

Document Version
Early version, also known as pre-print

[Link to publication from Aalborg University](#)

Citation for published version (APA):
López i Gelats, F. (1998). *The case of agroecology in the agricultural and rural policy in Europe A social-constructivist approach under the Winston Smith condition*. SPIRIT.

General rights

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal -

Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us at vbn@aub.aau.dk providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

Discussion Paper

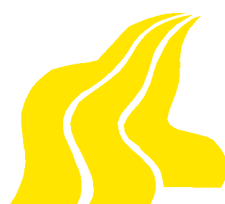
No. 25/2004

**THE CASE OF AGROECOLOGY
IN THE AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL POLICY
IN EUROPE**

**A SOCIAL-CONSTRUCTIVIST APPROACH
UNDER THE WINSTON SMITH CONDITION**

by

Feliu López i Gelats



SPIRIT

School for Postgraduate
Interdisciplinary Research on
Interculturalism and Transnationality

Aalborg University

Center for International Studies
Aalborg University

**THE CASE OF AGROECOLOGY IN THE
AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL POLICY IN EUROPE**
A social-constructivist approach
under the Winston Smith condition

Feliu López i Gelats

Discussion Paper No. 25/2004

© Feliu López i Gelats

ISSN 1397-9043

Published by:

SPIRIT

Aalborg University

Fibigerstraede 2

Dk-9220 Aalborg OE, Denmark

Phone + 45 96 35 84 38

Fax + 45 98 15 11 26

<http://www.humsamf.auc.dk/spirit>

*SPIRIT – School for Postgraduate Interdisciplinary Research
on Interculturalism and Transnationality*

Directors: Jean Monnet Professor Staffan Zetterholm & Associate Professor Henrik Halkier

SPIRIT is an interdisciplinary doctoral school for the systematic study of themes and theoretical issues related to the intertwining of political, transnational and intercultural processes in the contemporary world.

It is dedicated to examining – from the combined vantage point of both the human and the social sciences – cultural, political and communicative issues on a spectrum ranging from the local dimension over the national and the regional to the processes of globalisation that increasingly impinge on the organisation of life and the structure and dynamics of the world.

The thematic issues range from questions of European nationalism or European identity and integration; over transnational processes of migration, subcultures and international marketing; to transatlantic problems or nationalism and religion in Eastern Europe or the USA. What tie them together within the framework of *SPIRIT* are the school's distinctive features: Analysing themes in the context of the meanings and implications of internationality, and taking cultural/communicative as well as political/sociological aspects into account. The thematic area includes a long historical perspective reaching from pre-modern to contemporary Europe.

Considerable emphasis is placed on Europe - its history, politics, social anthropology, place in the world, relations to global issues, and trajectories for the future. On this background, research is conducted within the following four thematic areas:

1. Studies of Identity, Mentality and Culture
2. Global Markets and Organisations: Co-operation and Competition
3. Regions, Cultures and Institutional Change
4. International Politics, Ideas and International Change

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. POLICY ANALYSIS, POLICY DISCOURSES IN A MULTI-LEVEL GOVERNANCE	3
2.1. <i>Common framings for the dynamics of policy changes</i>	3
2.2. <i>Looking for an approach that makes sense</i>	7
2.3. <i>Policies as a consequence of socially-constructed discourses</i>	8
2.3.1. <i>Critical appraisal of social-constructivist approaches</i>	11
2.4. <i>A social-constructivist approach under the Winston Smith condition</i>	12
2.4.1. <i>Methodology</i>	17
2.4.1.1. <i>Multi-level governance</i>	18
2.4.1.2. <i>Conditions of discursive success</i>	20
3. INVENTORY OF DISCOURSES WITHIN THE AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL POLICY DOMAIN IN EUROPE	21
3.1. <i>Discourse of multifunctionality</i>	21
3.2. <i>Discourse of free tradism</i>	24
3.3. <i>Discourse of agroecology</i>	27
4. ASSESSMENT OF THE CONDITIONS OF DISCURSIVE SUCCESS	29
4.1. <i>Institutionalization of the discourse of multifunctionality</i>	30
4.2. <i>Institutionalization of the discourse of free tradism</i>	31
4.3. <i>Institutionalization of the discourse of agroecology</i>	33
4.4. <i>Attractiveness of the discourse of multifunctionality</i>	34
4.5. <i>Attractiveness of the discourse of free tradism</i>	36
4.6. <i>Attractiveness of the discourse of agroecology</i>	37
4.7. <i>Conclusions</i>	38
BIBLIOGRAPHY	42

The case of agroecology in the agricultural and rural policy in Europe

A social-constructivist approach under the Winston Smith condition

Feliu López i Gelats♦♦

1. Introduction

Since the 1980s, when policymakers made their first attempts to reform the Common Agricultural Policy due to problems relating to overproduction and large expenditures, struggles have been taking place between supporters of market liberalization and supporters of protectionist measures. From the first significant CAP reform in 1984 up to the last one in the Berlin Summit in 1999, struggles have been occurring between policies focusing on social aspects and economic policies as well as between policies based on state assistance and more and more market liberalization.

However, nowadays, GM crops distinctive threats to agriculture and human health, supermarkets' power over consumers and farmers, the imposition of the WTO liberalizing agenda, and the displacement of farmland to the worst places due to land speculation. Meanwhile, in spite of the promises of the Green and Biotechnology revolutions, the number of hungry people in the world is still increasing – even without considering China. Food crises take place one after another, and modern agriculture has become one of the most polluting and water- and land-consuming among human activities. Agribusiness spreads, and in the face of all this we have CAP promoting rentier agriculture. We also have EU Eastern enlargement, environmental criticisms, budget shortfall and the emergence of rural policy. It is now widely recognized that the agricultural and rural policy in Europe stands on the threshold of a radical reform.

Stemming from the awareness of these current harmful dynamics and challenges, an opportunity to change policy directions seems to be arising. More room has been opened up for new stances to thrive in the agricultural and rural policy domain. This is the case of agroecology. Agroecology is even more widespread in impoverished countries, like in Latin America, where the damaging consequences of modern agriculture and a still strong traditional agriculture

♦ Researcher at the Institute of Environmental Sciences and Technology (ICTA), and member of the PhD Programme in Environmental Sciences in the Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB).

Contact Address: Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, ICTA. Facultat de Ciències, Torre C5, 4^a Planta. 08193 Bellaterra (Cerdanyola del Vallès), Catalonia (Spain).

Email: feliu.lopez.gelats@uab.es.

♦ This discussion paper is a result of my stay at the School for Postgraduate Interdisciplinary Research on Interculturalism and Transnationality (*SPIRIT*) as a Marie Curie fellow, spring 2003. I would like to thank the contribution and kindness of Henrik Halkier who acted as supervisor during my stay at SPIRIT. Acknowledgements are also due to Iben Kierkegaard and Karina Andersen for their fruitful comments.

coexist. However, the expansion of agroecology in Europe should not be dismissed. This point is assessed in the present work.

Up to now, criticisms by agroecologists, of modern agri-food schemes, have proved to be appropriate. Nevertheless, prescriptions of agroecology have been put into practice mainly at estate level. If agroecology wants to play a more relevant role, more efforts are required to develop agroecological practices on larger scales as well. Agroecological projects of regional scope are scarce. The experience of the agricultural extension service of Associação Riograndense de Empreendimentos de Assistência Técnica e Extensão Rural, EMATER/RS, in the Brazilian State of Rio Grande do Sul, is probably the most remarkable. Thus, one of the most open fields for agroecology turns out to be dealing with how to promote agroecological policy changes. More work on agroecological policy transitions is required. Hence, the main concern of the present work consists in starting fill this gap, in order that agroecology does not become restricted to farming but spreads to other domains.

Thus, given that at present a policy window seems to be arising for new stances to thrive, and bearing in mind the lack of agroecological experiences of regional scope, it becomes relevant to assess the capacities of agroecology to take advantage of the present context to gain more influence in the agricultural and rural policy domain, in order to spread agroecological experiences at larger scales than only at the estate.

This work has a threefold objective: (a) deconstructing the main discourses interplaying in the European agricultural and rural policy domain; (b) assessing too what extent the identified discourses succeed in defining the agricultural and rural policy, particular attention is paid to agroecology; and finally (c) an approach to policy analysis is deployed that combines social-constructivism and multi-level governance.

In so doing, a social-constructivist approach is applied. It is claimed that the approach falls within the Winston Smith condition, with reference to George Orwell's novel "*Nineteen Eighty-Four*"¹, where Winston Smith shows us that there is always room for insurgence even within a state of overwhelming supremacy of a discourse. Thus, the social-constructivist approach proposed seeks an equilibrium between the constraints imposed by discourses and the liberating capacity of actors to modify them, between ideas and practices. This is why discourses are understood as particular relationships between sets of ideas and sets of practices. Besides, the approach is applied in a multi-level governance. It is thought that this approach makes a lot of sense in relation to the

¹ George Orwell brilliantly depicted the relation between discourses and power in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949). By means of emphasising how reality is discursively constructed, he illustrates the establishment of a fictitious totalitarian state, whose foundations rest on the substitution of *oldspeak* by *newspeak*. *Newspeak*, by means of a very limited vocabulary, and *doublethink* make people unwilling and unable to think too deeply about any subject. Thus, they eradicate some undesired behaviours from society. Also, the ubiquitous *Big Brother* shows the upsetting omnipresence of power.

dynamics of the agricultural and rural policy domain, how different discourses live together and co-evolve within it, and they experience their struggles and alliances, but also how these agricultural and rural policies specifically are being generated.

Firstly, the social-constructivist approach under the Winston Smith condition is introduced as one that appropriately makes sense of the main features of the agricultural and rural policy domain in Europe. Later, an inventory is undertaken as regards the discourses interplaying within the domain. The discourses of free tradism, multifunctionality and agroecology are the ones deconstructed. Then these three discourses are assessed by considering to what extent they fulfil the conditions of discursive success. Finally, some overall considerations are made.

2. Policy analysis, policy discourses in a multi-level governance.

From the importance given to increasing harvests during the 1960s, up to restrictions on production since the 1980s, the dynamics of policies are not stable, but evolve over time. As showed here by the CAP, the rationality held by policies changes, and the direction of the policies issued varies. As a consequence, the purpose here turns into developing an approach capable of shedding light on the dynamics of the agricultural and rural policy domain so as to test the possibility of agroecological policy transitions in Europe.

Thus, firstly some of the most commonly used theoretical approaches to make sense of the dynamics of policy changes are briefly outlined. Secondly, the crucial features that a coherent approach should be capable of making sense in order to shed light on the agricultural and rural policy domain are introduced. Lastly, the social-constructivist approach under the Winston Smith condition is proposed.

2.1. Common framings for the dynamics of policy changes

Many attempts have been made to make sense of the dynamics of policy changes. Some are briefly unfolded below. It is not a comprehensive report, but an overview of how the dynamics of policy changes have been more often characterised. The overview is considered so as to highlight the main requirements needed to undertake an informed appraisal of the dynamics of the agricultural and rural policy domain in Europe. The attempts considered are the following: (a) conventional economic analyses, based on market failures and policy failures; (b) several theories raised within international relations, e.g. liberal intergovernmentalism, neo-functionalism and new institutionalism, which are some among the more influential; and finally, (c) policy network analyses, which draws on elements from public policy analyses.

Conventional economic analyses see public policy dynamics as an ever-lasting process of expansion of (1) market and/or (2) government over all domains of social life, since they are considered the most efficient collective decision-making systems. It is assumed that both the market and the government are the

best aggregators of social preferences. Thus, any dysfunction, that is, any undesired outcome generated by them is interpreted as consequences of abnormal circumstances, e.g. mismanagements of well-fitted machines. Solutions will always come from further utilisations of them.

In the case of market failures, undesired outcomes fuel policy changes. It is only under circumstances of market failures that the market must be interfered with. Market failures take place in situations where free market forces do not automatically lead to maximum welfare. Habitually, they occur because of: inadequate information, poorly specified property rights and monopoly power.

Inadequate information takes place when prices perform inappropriately in indicating the utilities and disutilities linked to a given product or service. The lack of internalisation of utilities and disutilities within prices may give birth to negative externalities, which turn into ill intra-generational allocations of utilities and disutilities. *Intertemporal myopia* may also be the consequence of prices reflecting inaccurate information, which promotes poor inter-generation utility and disutility allocations. A very common case takes place when setting too high discount rates in present prices. It prioritises the utility associated with present consumption, disregarding future generations. A well-known example of a market failure linked to inadequate information might be the exhaustion of non-renewable resources.

Market failures	
<u>Situations</u>	<u>Unexpected outcomes</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate information • Poorly specified property rights • Monopoly power 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Externalities • Inter-temporal myopia • Gap between private and social discount rate

Table 2.1. Market failures

It is assumed that an economy with an accurate definition of exchangeable property rights generates the right incentives to promote efficient allocation of the goods and services at issue. A paradigmatic example of an ill definition of property rights is the open-access regime, where access to resources and services is not restricted, and the stock can be exploited on a basis of first-come-first-served basis. The outcome is a disproportionate discount of the future. Besides, another unexpected outcome occurs, since the situation seems to foster individualistic behaviour. Thus, a divergence between private and social discount rates occurs.

Monopoly is the case when a commodity is sold by a single supplier, who exerts disproportionate influence on the exchange outcome. The lack of a competitive market results in higher prices and a lower production, which generates negative externalities. Thus, consumers have to pay for the utility associated with the given commodity. Furthermore, a monopolistic situation also encourages the divergence between private and social discount rates.

Like market failures, the unexpected outcomes of policy failures stimulate policy changes². It is assumed that governments consist of well-designed institutions, ideal for collective decision-making. Failures are seen as inefficiencies and consequences of abnormal circumstances. Thus, by means of a process of institutional learning, a policy is reshaped to tackle the new circumstances. Improper incentives lie at the very core of policy failures. Inappropriate incentives are sources of divergences between individual and collective aims. This is the case in the following examples: disproportionate agricultural subsidies linked to production, disregarding small, low-tech farmers; a too permissive policy and a licence to over-utilise *green* labels, thus misleading consumers³. Other policy inefficiencies may come from successes in *rent-seeking* by some interest groups to secure policies that suit their interests, but are highly likely to lower the benefits of the society as a whole⁴.

International relations have deployed several theories to shed light on policy dynamics. Among them: liberal intergovernmentalism, neo-functionalism and new institutionalism. Thus, liberal intergovernmentalists assume states are the key actors: “(...)states are rational self-interested actors, that they “read” the demands of society, that these demands are somehow aggregated (...) and (...) negotiate over differences in the international arena”⁵. Accordingly, the European Union would be as powerful as the Member States wished it to be⁶.

Neo-functionalists understand policy dynamics as a process of gradual emergence of collective decision-making systems, which is considered to be the most effective system to deal with in regards to the policy problems at issue. It is assumed that actor’s agency is constrained by the very project that actors built. Thus, the emergence of the EU is considered a unique effective solution to a set of given problems. Once an integration step is taken, it spreads and fosters further integration. Hence, the development of the EU integration policy causes

² For an extended discussion on how conventional economic analyses use the terms “policy” and “market failure”, see: Tietenberg (2001), and Pearce and Turner (1990).

³ This is the case of the controversy that arose in Spain, when the government issued a Royal Decree in May 2001. It allows commercialisation of labels with “bio” and “biologic” of any good, even those with no special ecological qualities. Farmers’ unions, consumer associations and environmentalist organisations denounced the situation. In November 2002, the European Commission agreed with them and set up a two month period for the Spanish government to repeal the act that was considered to contradict the *Acquis Communautaire*. Up to now, the Spanish government has done nothing, and the act is still in force. It seems that the case of “false bio” is going to reach the European Court of Justice soon.

⁴ Concerning the EU, the traditional permeability of EU Parliament to consumer groups is widely known, as is that of the Commission to environmentalist groups (Peterson and Bomberg, 1999:27).

⁵ Caporaso (1998:9).

⁶ For a Liberal Intergovernmentalist hypothesis overview, concerning the EU development, see Moravcsik (1993).

a spill-over effect stemming from the previously developed EU common market policy⁷.

The basic lesson from new institutionalism is that institutions matter. They are the source of much political behaviour, and not impartial *black boxes* simply transforming collective preferences into policies. It is also highlighted that institutions do not provide equal access to all, thus wishing to exert an influence on the policy process. New institutionalism is concerned with factors beyond the formal roles or legal powers of executives, parliaments, etc. and new institutionalism focuses on values, norms and informal conventions, which drive exchanges among actors. New institutionalism emphasizes how actors become socialized according to the rules of the game, set up by the polity, and the underlying trend to a consensus.

The importance given to behind-the-scenes bargainings makes new institutionalists aware of the complexity associated with collective decision-making. The need for agreement among so many decision-makers makes it difficult to easily agree on policies. Furthermore, path dependency turns out to be a crucial feature of policy dynamics. Once a decision is made, it both excludes and facilitates others. Once a path is chosen, it is very difficult to reject it and go back. Hence, the well-known saying which holds that the EU building motor is logrolling between French farmers and German metal industrialists, is just a sample of what lies behind the EU formal policy processes⁸.

Finally, a policy network analysis, drawing on elements from public policy analyses, describes the policy dynamics as driven by policy networks. A policy network is thus a cluster of actors, each of them around particular interests. In a policy network, actors are interdependent due to scarcity of resources – legitimacy, expertise, information, etc. Actors are pushed to bargain and achieve agreements, to further their interests. Usually, policy networks bring together as many institutional actors as stakeholders. It is assumed that interactions within a policy network prepare decision-makings and build a consensus through informal communication and backroom bargaining⁹.

It is considered that epistemic communities and advocacy coalitions play relevant roles in a policy network interactions. An epistemic community “...is a network of professionals with recognized expertise and competence in a particular domain and an authoritative claim to policy-relevant knowledge within that domain or issue-area”¹⁰, whereas advocacy coalitions turn out to be groups of actors built around core political beliefs. Advocacy coalitions are capable of effective political actions, since members interact repeatedly and thus exchange information easily and join in support of policies that will treat them fairly¹¹.

⁷ For an overview of Neo-functionalism, see Haas (1964).

⁸ For an account of the New Institutional hypothesis, applied to federal systems, see Scharpf (1988).

⁹ For an account on Policy Network Analysis, see Rhodes (1997).

¹⁰ Haas (1992:3).

¹¹ Sabatier (1998).

2.2. Looking for an approach that makes sense

The main features constituting the agricultural and rural policy domain in Europe are addressed. Firstly, the cohabitation within the CAP of contradictory policy measures suggests that different logics are interacting. Thus, within the CAP, it is possible to find on the one hand Extensification Premiums and Hill Livestock Compensatory Allowances, concerned with reducing production of lamb and beef; and, on the other hand, subsidies to exportation of cereals, stemming from the application of the guaranteed prices system in a situation of structural over-production.

Secondly, the so-claimed situation of a policy-set inflation and a policy-implemented deficit seems to suggest that the European polity prioritises some sort of policy outcomes¹². It can be interpreted as if not only different rationalities are coexisting, but also that they have a dissimilar capacity to accede to the different levels of the policy process. Thereby, the transposition process turns out to be a far more complex process than it is normally thought to be, a process of complex negotiations among coexisting rationalities within a set of institutional constraints.

Finally, actors interplaying in the policy process, as many institutional actors as stakeholders, hold incoherent stances. The position of actors seems to be context-dependent. Their standpoint is quite fickle. Often it is rather difficult to recognise continuity between what actors say and what actors do. Actors hold different rationalities according to the role they are playing and according to the practice in which they are involved¹³.

The overview provided above showed different ways of conceptualising the dynamics of policy changes. However, they hold some relevant shortcomings to make sense of the agricultural and rural policy domain. First of all, both the models coming from international relations and the policy network analysis are based on actor-centred hypotheses. But, the incoherence shown by actors discredits the attempt to make sense of the policy dynamics by focusing on the interests and strategies of actors.

Secondly, all of them take for granted a tendency towards consensus, towards agreement. The ability to act righteously is thus presumed. The application of such theoretical framings implies, in the end, assuming the existence of a unique rationality. There is just one way of doing things right. Thus, the point is that one can only improve this way. The concern is about efficiency then. Such a framing can hardly be related to the coexistence of different rationalities, which would imply an intrinsic trend towards a disensus.

¹² For an interesting report on the gap between policy goals and outcomes, concerning the EU environmental policy, see Jordan (1999). According to this report, the suspected infringements in relation to the implementation of the EU environmental policy were 1433 in 1994.

¹³ Although in a very different field, a familiar example of such a situation is provided by Proops (2001:17), who highlights the apparent inconsistency of opposing abortion on the grounds of the sanctity of human life while simultaneously supporting capital punishment.

Finally, as accepted by new institutionalists and policy network analysis practitioners, but not by the proponents of the conventional economic analysis, liberal intergovernmentalists and neo-functionalists, it is not very fruitful to picture politics as impartial black boxes, which transform social preferences into policies. In order to make proper sense of the agricultural and rural policy domain, we require an approach which is able to make sense of the role of informal rules and the behind-the-scenes bargaining, since they are important in determining policies¹⁴.

<u>Proposed approach</u>	
Cohabitation of different rationalities	→ Inter-discursivity
Incoherence of actors	→ Discourses are not linked to actors, but to practices ¹⁵
Dissimilar capacity of access to the different moments of the policy process	→ Multi-level governance dynamics

Table 2.2. Main assumptions about the proposed approach

Thus, the final approach enforced should be able to make sense of the following features: (a) cohabitation of different rationalities; (b) incoherence of actors; and finally, (c) the coexisting rationalities, which have a dissimilar capacity of access to the different moments of the policy process. I argue below that a social-constructivist approach, applied in a multi-level governance, successfully makes sense of the features. Therefore, it is appropriate to shed light on the dynamics of the agricultural and rural policy in Europe. Besides, it may provide some meaningful insides to enhance agroecology within this domain. The social-constructivist approach makes sense of the first two features. In turn, the multi-level governance sheds light on the dissimilar capacity of access to the different moments of the policy process.

2.3. Policies as a consequence of socially-constructed discourses

Discourse studies consist of a cross-disciplinary field of research that emerged as such in the 1960s, within the humanities and social sciences. Initially developed in linguistics, literary studies and anthropology, it soon spread over other domains. The seminal work of the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure¹⁶ (1857-1913) has been fundamental.

¹⁴ For instance, at this respect, Peterson and Bomberg (1999:48) assert that “...a large slice of EU decision-making is informal...”

¹⁵ Sabatier (1987) argues that it is easier to identify beliefs – linked to discourses - than to ascribe interests – linked to actors. In this sense, a reflective - social-constructivist - approach holds some methodological advantages for empirical research over structural and institutional approaches, which base their analyses on interests.

¹⁶ Saussure (1910).

In the *Course in General Linguistics* - a reconstruction of Saussure's lecture notes and other materials by two of his students - he develops his ideas on the basis of language structure. Saussure has thus set the foundations for the structuralist school in linguistics, and also to social theory when positing that the principles of linguistics apply to all social phenomena. His pivotal idea is that the meaning of a word is to be understood in relation to other words. According to him, language and everything around it is made up of *signs*, which we interpret to make sense of the world. Each sign is constituted by a *signifier* – word - and a *signified* – the meaning of the word. Language is a social phenomenon that is seen as a structured system. Structuralism argues that it is not possible to know reality directly, but only through the conceptual and linguistic structures of our culture. Language structure is thought to reflect social structure¹⁷. The position of Saussure challenged the main stream at his time, empiricism, which considers that it is possible to discover the meanings and patterns to be found in the world. However, since the end of 1960s, theories of language and discourse have emerged, challenging Saussure, mainly in regards to the unity of the sign. Thus, the assumption that signifier and signified are solidly tied is reversed. The existence of struggles among discourses for signification, to set the signified, is claimed. Post-structuralists hold this view.

As an account of all developments in discourse analysis lies beyond the scope of this paper¹⁸, I would like to focus only on approaches that, in my opinion, may be meaningful to policy analysis. However, a brief overview may prove helpful. There is no consensus in understanding discourse analysis. A wide range of positions may be found, from rationalism to social-constructivism or, using Johnstone's¹⁹ terminology, from those using discourse as a mass noun to those using discourse as a countable noun.

On the one side, rationalists use discourse as a *mass noun*. Discourse becomes any form of communication - talk, writing, singing, etc. It is an abstract system of rules or structural relationships. Discourse analysis holds a descriptive role. Attention is paid to “...*what happens when people draw on the knowledge they have about language, based on their memories of things they have said, heard, seen, or written before, to do things in the world: exchange information, express feelings, make things happen, create beauty, entertain themselves and others, and so on*”²⁰. Rationalists assume an existence of permanent links between reality and knowledge²¹. Discourse is seen as a mere communicative exchange. A

¹⁷ Cf. also Levi-Strauss (1963)

¹⁸ For overviews of a wide range of discursive approaches, see van Dijk (1985), Jaworski and Coupland (1999), and Wetherell, Taylor and Yates (2001).

¹⁹ Johnstone (2002:2-3).

²⁰ Ibid. (3).

²¹ In fact, more precisely speaking rationalists are not dealing with *reality*. They are dealing with a model. They argue that there are some eternal rules, truths, which govern the working of the model, and the task in which they are engaged becomes trying to uncover them. According to realists then there is only one way of *doing things right*. That is, there is only one way to truth. This latter point is probably the main difference between social-constructivism and rationalism. For instance, concerning the ecological crisis, they hold that it is inherent in physical facts.

consensus on policy matters thus becomes possible by means of exchange and comparison of objective findings - facts.

On the other side, we have those using discourse as a *countable noun*. Discourses turn into ways of talking, which both create and are created by ways of thinking. Therefore, ways of thinking can be manipulated by means of choices about grammar, style, wording, and every other aspect of language. The linked ways of talking and thinking constitute ideologies and serve to circulate power in society²². Discourse analysis not only holds a descriptive role, but also a prescriptive one. Discourse analysis may allow some social critique and thus intervention. This approach is mainly applied within the humanities and social sciences, while the first one is principally applied within linguistics, literary studies, anthropology and psychology.

Social-constructivists argue that the way an issue is constructed determines the way it is addressed. They are not interested in problems as such, but rather in the very problem-making processes. Thus, policy problems are not seen as straightforward consequences of objective facts, but social constructs that have been constructed in discourse. The point stressed by social-constructivists is the non-innocence of how an issue is discursively framed. So, understanding policies as socially-constructed discourses implies assuming the non-appropriateness of understanding policies as answers to problems, but problems as constructions of the very policy proposals²³.

Between these two confronted poles of discourse analysis, many works may be found: from utilisations of software packages of qualitative data analysis²⁴, from a plainly rationalist stance; intermediate approaches, such as some applications of Q-methodology²⁵ and other works²⁶, with a weaker rationalist standpoint; works closer to social-constructivists perspectives, under what can be called the *world-and-discourse approach*²⁷, which assumes that representations of reality are socially constructed²⁸; works within the *world-through-discourse approach*,

²² Johnstone (2002:3).

²³ For an overview of how the term *discourse* has been used in policy analysis, see Bacchi (2000).

²⁴ As Nudist or QSR Nvivo. For more information, see: http://www.scolari.co.uk/qsr/qsr_nvivo.htm.

²⁵ The psychologist and physicist William Stephenson invented Q-methodology in the 1930s, as an attempt to uncover subjectivity. It is a quantitative measure of subjective data. Lately it has been more and more applied in social sciences, particularly in the USA. Thus, Q-methodology is being used to seek patterns of responses across individuals so as to reveal underlying or unrecognised social discourses specifically connected to an issue. For application of Q-methodology to environmental issues, see Addams and Proops (2000), and Barry and Proops (1999).

²⁶ See, for instance, the discourse analysis of Proops (2001). This concerns the development of commercial nuclear power, where it is argued that the rise of nuclear power can be explained by the relation between the discourse of the modernising and interventionist state and the discourse for nuclear power utilisation, thus offering control and modernity. Also recommendable is the work of Tàbara, Costejà and van Woerden (2004), where the term *cultural frameworks* is used to explore the social conflict which emerged concerning water management, after the approval by the Spanish government of the *Plan Hidrológico Nacional*. They undertake the work by means of analysing related news published by the main Spanish newspapers.

²⁷ Ulf Hedetoft during an intervention in a seminar held at School of Postgraduate Interdisciplinary Research on Interculturalism and Transnationality – SPIRIT - at Aalborg University 25 March 2003, made the following distinction within the social-constructivist tradition: the world-and-discourse approach, the world-through-discourse approach, and finally the world-as-discourse approach.

²⁸ This weak social-constructivist approach is held in the following works concerning rurality: Jones (1995), Frouws (1998) and Halfacree (1995). Also, Halkier (2003) explores the role of discourse in the transformation of a particular

which shows a stronger social-constructivist positioning since it sees reality as a social construct²⁹; and finally, the *world-as-discourse approach* of radical social-constructivists, who defend that it is only possible to tackle the world by means of discursive constructs³⁰.

2.3.1. Critical appraisal of social-constructivist approaches

Let us now look for the strengths and weaknesses of social-constructivism. Critics argue that the social-constructivist approaches lack conceptual precision and methodological rigour. It is also claimed that some crucial variables are neglected: interests of actors, since too much focus is placed on values instead of interests; and the role of institutions, since *the links between these cognitive and normative variable and the institutional context are rarely made explicit*³¹. Underlying the reasoning, there are the classical criticisms to social-constructivism³², namely: (a) the objection of solipsism; (b) the objection of relativism; and finally (c) the objection of idealism.

The objection of solipsism claims that a social-constructivist approach would imply denial of any material reality. Pre-social and extra-human ways of being are neglected. The extra-discursive world does not exist. In this case, for instance, ecological crises would be framed as a subjective illusion. But a social-constructivist account of nature does not mean the denial of an ecological crisis³³, but rather that it should be framed within a given social context and experience. Thus, *“With the statement that society is always discursively constituted it is by no means claimed that it mere linguistic phenomenon. Discourse theory uses the analogy to language to point that society is structured like linguistic discourses”*³⁴.

The objection of relativism argues that social-constructivist approaches carry along total relativism. There is no possible way to decide among competing discourses. Due to lack of extra-discursive points of reference and the subjective

form of regional policy in Scotland, in the wake of the advent of the neo-liberal Conservative government of Margaret Thatcher.

²⁹ In this approach, despite the constraints imposed by discourses, there is still room for agency. See Hajer (1995) on the role of the discourse of ecological modernisation in the policy process of the Netherlands and the United Kingdom; Andersen and Kjær (1996) on the institutional history; Dryzek (1997) on the main discourses in environmental politics; Litfin (1994) for a discursive approach towards the ozone conflict; by Said's (1978) influential book on post-colonial studies; Fairclough (1992) as well as Fairclough and Wodak (1997) for an account of the sociolinguistic approach of the Critical Discourse Analysis; and, finally, Richardson (2000) on the discursive construction of rurality within the EU spatial policy.

³⁰ See the fundamental work of Foucault (1975), and also Laclau and Mouffe (1985) for an account of their discourse theory.

³¹ Surel (2000:499).

³² Dingler (2003:5-11).

³³ As said by Hajer (1995), it should not be misunderstood as an argument to neglect ecological problems. The overwhelming spreading over society of environmental discourses shows the success in making sense of the realities of people. The purpose here is just to emphasize that policy dynamics are better understood, taking into account the discourses that guide our perception of reality. In tune with this reasoning Laclau and Mouffe (1985:108) argue: *“An earthquake or the falling of a brick is an event that certainly exists, in the sense that it occurs here and now, independently of my will. But whether their specificity as objects is constructed in terms of natural phenomena or expressions of the wrath of God, depends upon the structuring of a discursive field. What is denied is not that such objects exist externally to thought, but the rather different assertion that they could constitute themselves as objects outside any discursive condition of emergence”*.

³⁴ Stäheli (2000:8), in Dingler (2003).

nature of all discourses, it is structurally impossible to make decisions. There is no best argument. It is the end of politics. But a social-constructivist account does not mean the death of politics. Rather the contrary; it implies the expansion of politics. Some categories normally regarded as apolitical now become highly political. Thus, is nature a political concept? Is development³⁵ a political term? And what about the Orient³⁶, does it exist? Is science a political activity? Is buying ecological products a political action? They are all among so many new questions arising.

The objection of idealism asserts that social-constructivist approaches believe that discourses create material reality. That is, it claims that social-constructivism solves one of the classical challenges of social sciences, *the gap between what one says and what one does*, by considering that discourses make reality. However, such a naïve conclusion is not social-constructivism. Rather, the point made is that material reality is only accessible through discourse. It can only be experienced and categorised discursively.

Nevertheless, some doubts still remain. What is the role of actors? What is the role of institutions? What is their role in policy changes? In my opinion, it is worth continuing within social-constructivism, rather than remaining under other umbrellas: new institutionalism, rationalism, etc. However, in some cases I might agree with them: institutions matter, they are not impartial black boxes turning preferences into policies; and a balance should be attained between normative and cognitive elements, between actors and institutions, and between symbolic and material reality.

Within a social-constructivist tradition, a world-through-discourse approach is proposed in order to shed light on the dynamics of the agricultural and rural policy domain. Thus, a theoretically-informed and empirically-relevant discourse theory is deployed, fundamentally influenced by the works of: Foucault, Laclau and Mouffe, Åkerstrøm Andersen, Hajer, Dryzek and Koselleck. It becomes an attempt to deal satisfactorily with the classical criticisms to social constructivism while, at the same time, making sense of the role of actors and institutions.

2.4. A social-constructivist approach under the *Winston Smith condition*

Foucault overemphasises the constraints imposed by discourses. Discourses are important, but they are not impenetrable. Discourses are not disembodied phenomena, since they require human agents for their initiation, application and dissemination. According to Foucault, the subject is wholly a product of power. “*Power is omnipresent; one is never outside it*”³⁷. Discourse is a kind of prison

³⁵ Cf. works of Arturo Escobar on the discourse of development. For instance “... *it is crucial that development not be seen solely as an economic and political project but as an overarching cultural discourse that has had a profound impact on the fabric of the Third World*” (Escobar, 1992:63).

³⁶ In *Orientalism*, Edward Said (1978) argues that the present conceptions of the Orient consist of a particular discourse constructed by the West, particularly France and England, to dominate the region. What the West called the Orient, in fact, has never existed, except in the minds of Westerners that have been using it as a tool to subjugate the region.

³⁷ Foucault (1980:141).

from which it is not possible to escape. There is no autonomous subjectivity for Foucault³⁸. Then there is no room for the agency of subjects. But, “*Even language, probably the most all-encompassing model of power, does not determine all of our thoughts and actions, though it may circumscribe them*”³⁹. As shown by Winston Smith, the man who works for the ministry of Truth in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* by George Orwell, there is always room for insurgence even within a state of overwhelming supremacy of a given discourse. It is possible to escape from *Foucauldian prisons*.

The purpose then turns into deploying a social-constructivist approach under the *Winston Smith condition*. That is, led by the concern of balancing the constraining Foucauldian discourses and the actors’ agency. This might also be understood as an attempt of combining realist ontology and hermeneutic epistemology⁴⁰, since it is necessary to provide actors with a common ground outside discourses in order to allow for the actors’ agency⁴¹.

Admitting then the commitment to a *world-through-discourse approach*, a two-dimensional conception of discourse is considered. That is, discourses are seen as sets of ideas, which are produced and reproduced by sets of practices, in which actors are engaged. But at the same time, the very practices are produced and reproduced by these ideas.

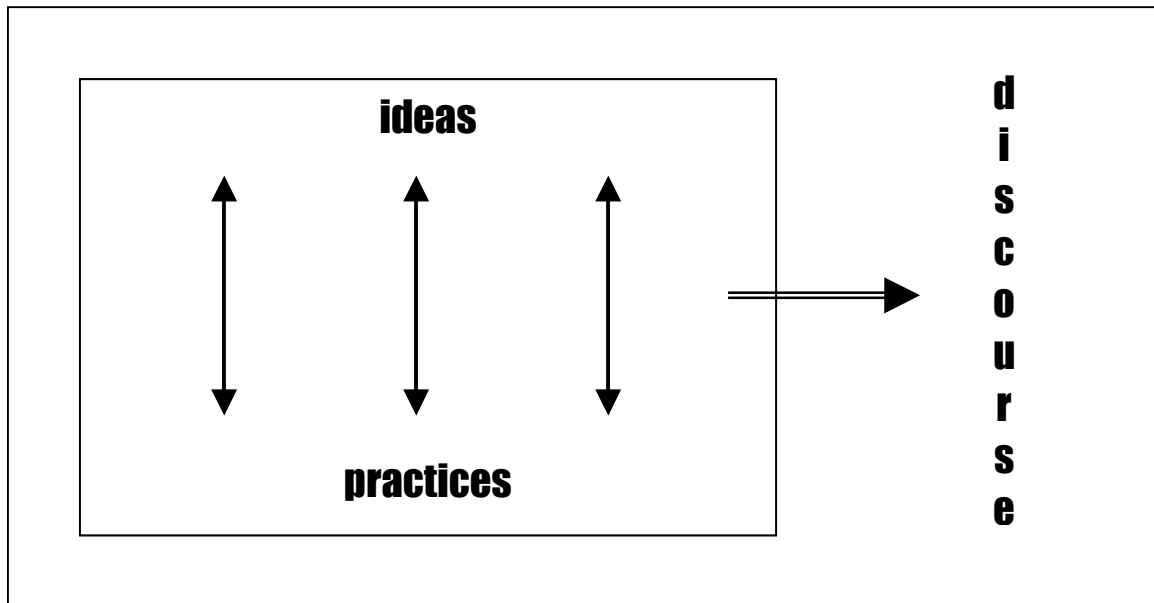


Figure 2.1. Discourse

³⁸ Litfin (1994:21).

³⁹ Ibid. (23).

⁴⁰ The work of Arturo Escobar on the way to an *Antiessentialist Political Ecology* seems to be a similar endeavour (Escobar, 1999).

⁴¹ Later, when outlining the approach to discourse analysis applied in this work, I will name the common ground outside discourses *floating signifiers*, cf. Laclau and Mouffe (1985).

There is thus a mutual dependency between practices and ideas⁴². Both are produced and reproduced by actors, since it is actors who spread, shape and stop using ideas, and who undertake practices. It is obvious that actors are essential. But actors are concerned with different discourses at the same time. That is, it is thought that the ideas expressed by actors depend on the practices in which actors are engaged⁴³. Thus, the defining features of discourses are practices, instead of actors.

Thus, the formation of nodal points⁴⁴, the articulation of certain nodal points into discourses, and finally the reification of certain discourses into institutions, are the three steps of increasing articulation of differences⁴⁵. The process of construction is not a placid path. Rather, it is an ever-lasting struggle among different selections of differences to reach higher degrees of construction.

Nodal points represent opened discursive spaces to struggle for meaning. Discourses are constructions of discursive spaces by means of articulating nodal points in order to build a given rationality. Institutions consist of discursive spaces from which it is possible to speak and act not only rationally but also with authority. Like in the case of discourses, the two-dimensional nature of discourses also applies to nodal points and institutions.

⁴² Furthermore, a two-dimensional conception of discourses allows for a *methodological pluralism* that not only should not be dismissed, but also might become promising. Thus, integrations of discourse analysis with, namely, biophysical accounting or a multi-criteria evaluation, are fields to be explored in policy analysis.

⁴³ Let us examine, for instance, the example of Mr. Tony Blair, who has held disparate positions as regards war, on the one side, when as a peace loving activist twenty years ago, a card-carrying member of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, and on the other side, when as Prime Minister of Great Britain, he backed up the USA in the Second Gulf War. The hypothesis defended here is that the shift seen in Mr. Blair, from pacifist ideas to pro-war ideas, is as a result of the different practices in which he is engaged nowadays, as Prime Minister, and twenty years ago as common citizen. See: <http://www.cnduk.org>.

⁴⁴ *Ideals* of Åkerstrøm Andersen and Kjær (1996), *story-lines* of Hajer (1995), *nodal points* of Laclau and Mouffe (1985), and *concepts* of Koselleck (1982), are understood as quite similar, despite the subtle differences existing among them. However, the term *nodal point* is preferred, since it transmits more clearly the sense, which interests me the most, namely the pivotal words around which discourses are anchored and developed.

⁴⁴ From the seminal book of Laclau and Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy. Towards a Radical Democratic Politics* (1985).

⁴⁵ Nodal points, discourses and institutions are different degrees of construction of articulated selections of differences. The three of them are produced and reproduced by the actors' agency. But they are not produced and reproduced by the same set of actors all the time. This is why now and again it might look as if the status of living beings is given to nodal points, discourses and institutions, inasmuch as they have their own history, their own identity. Obviously they evolve, as actors do, and similarly to actors it is still possible to recognise them despite their evolution. Like a government of a given country, which depends completely on the people working there. But, at the same time, these people come and go and, even though the government evolves and changes, it is still possible to distinguish it. It keeps an identity for a long time. The same works for nodal points, discourses and institutions, as they are understood here.

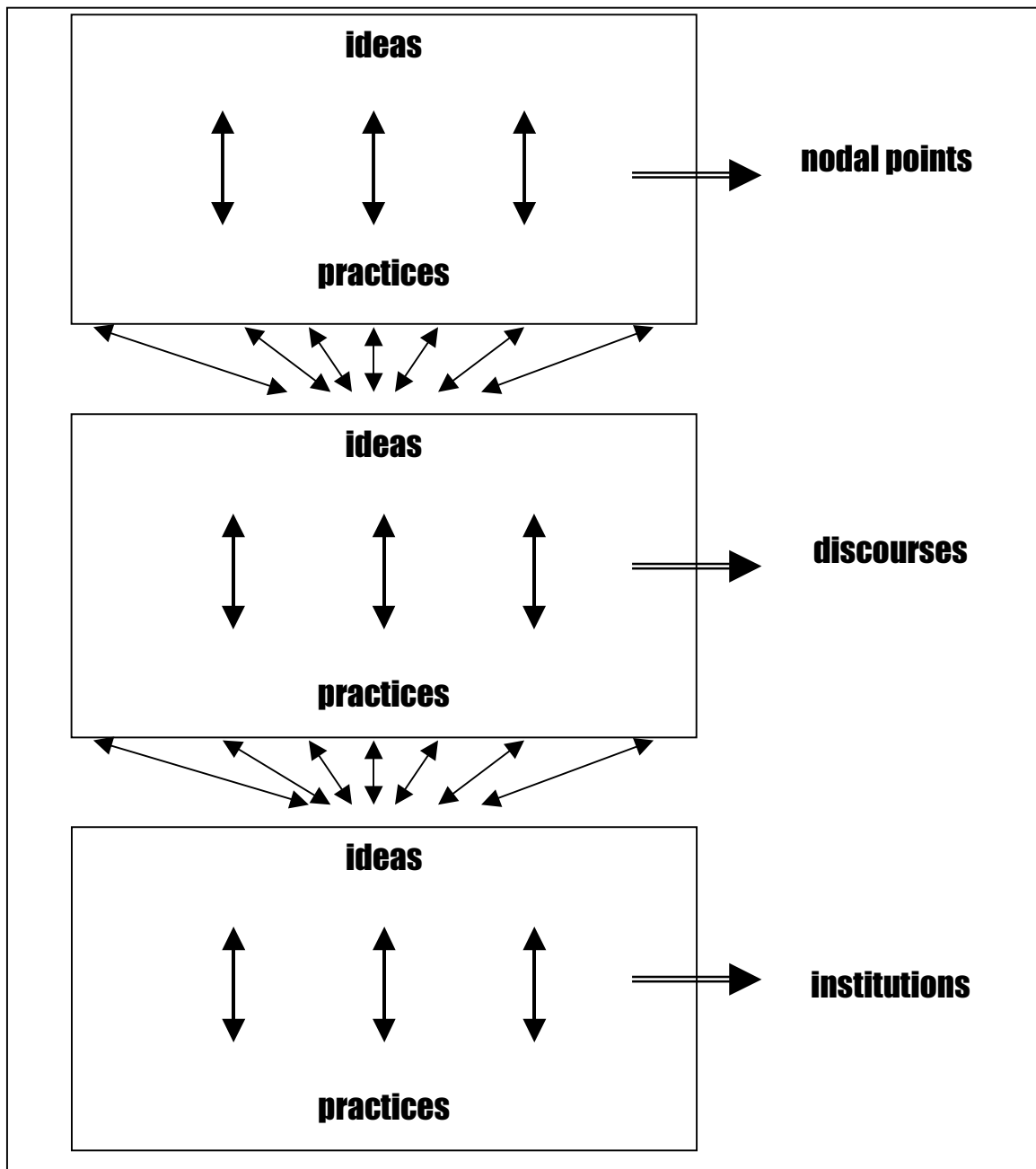


Figure 2.2. Three degrees of construction

In figure 2.3 the world-through-discourse approach deployed here is sketched out. The three levels of construction of differences are put in a broader context. Nodal points, from which discourses are articulated, spring from *floating signifiers*⁴⁶. Nodal points are meaningless in themselves, and only acquire meaning relationally. They consist of the application of what might be called *common sense*. By using nodal points, by putting them into context, the nodal points acquire meaning. The nodal points then consist of particular integrations

⁴⁶ Term coined by Laclau and Mouffe (1985).

of acknowledged past elements, future expectations and present struggles⁴⁷. The space of meaning of nodal points stems from this confluence.

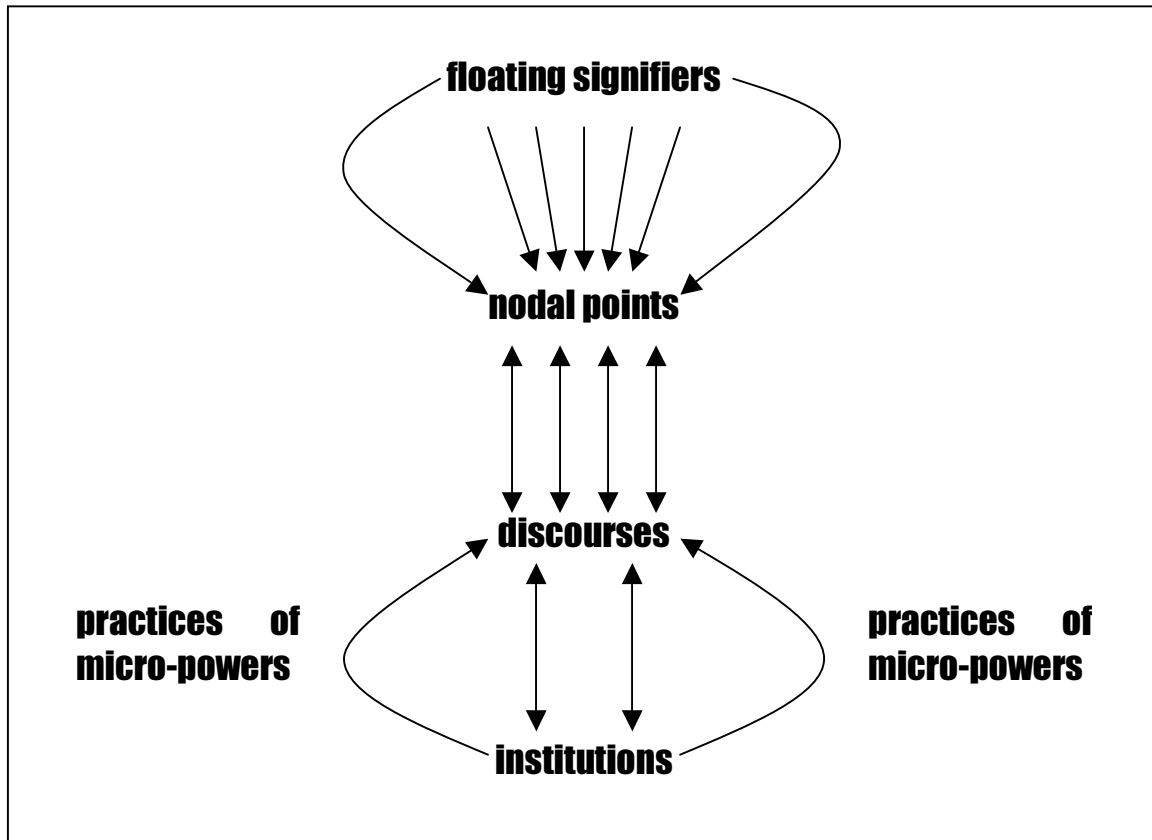


Figure 2.3. Social-constructivist approach under the Winston Smith condition

Nodal points are obviously not constant, although they are more stable than discourses and institutions. Therefore, given that “*words which persist are in themselves insufficient indicators for stable contents and because – vice-versa – contents underlying long-term change can be expressed in very different ways*”⁴⁸, not only discourses and institutions, but also nodal points, are framed as two-dimensional entities: on the one hand practices and on the other hand ideas. Thus, it is possible to shed more light on situations where different discourses struggle to grasp particular nodal points, by using similar names for different practices. Let us think, for instance, about the amazing wide range of meanings showed by some words: democracy, sustainability, development, liberalism, and so on. This is understood as the consequence of struggles among discourses to take control of particularly successful nodal points.

The term *floating signifiers* is borrowed from Laclau and Mouffe⁴⁹, and it names the common ground shared by actors outside discourses. They are the shared experience outside discourses that provide actors with the capacity of modifying discourses. The floating signifiers are of crucial importance, since they allow for

⁴⁷ As says Koselleck (1982:412) when talking about *concepts*.

⁴⁸ Ibid. (423).

⁴⁹ Laclau and Mouffe (1985).

the actors' agency. They are fundamental in order to reach the desired balance between the actors' agency and the constraining workings of discourses and institutions. Floating signifiers possess no meaning since they are not articulated. Only occasionally is it possible to find some features on the discursive terrain. Some of them are just very small hills - nodal points - that are meaningless in themselves and only acquire some meaning relationally. Scarcely abundant are mountains – discourses - higher constructions as a consequence of articulation of different nodal points. Rarely do other features turn up on the horizon, mountain ranges – institutions, and overwhelming constructions that are the result of the consecration of certain discourses.

2.4.1. Methodology

It has not been easy to find empirical works on policy discourse analysis. Looking for systematisations of how to undertake a policy discourse analysis becomes even more difficult. The work of Dryzek, Koselleck, Hajer, Andersen and Laclau and Mouffe, has been used as reference points. All of them are acknowledged as key influences to develop the world-through-discourse approach deployed here to analyse the rural and agricultural policy in Europe. However, the approach does not lock itself in policy analysis. It is not just a tool to describe social systems. It may be also a prescriptive tool, by suggesting new forms of resistance to hegemonic discourses, by offering new forms of participation, by opening up new spaces of freedom.

The Analysis of discourses (Dryzek)	The argumentative analysis (Hajer)	The three orders of discourse (Andersen)	The three basic dichotomies (Koselleck)	The two discursive practices (Laclau and Mouffe)	Steps of the discourse analysis (Michel Foucault)
Basic entities	Structuration: - Trust - Credibility - Acceptability	Descriptive: - Object/object - Instrument/object - Cause/effect	Before/after	Elements	Genealogy
Natural relationships	Institutionalization: - Practices of micro-power	Narrative: - Inside/outside - Past/future - Subject/object	Outside/inside	Moments	Critique
Agents and their motives		Argumentative : - Acceptable/unacceptable	Up/down		
Key metaphors					

Table 2.3. Different approaches to what to look for when undertaking a discourse

By means of reading selected documents, interviewing relevant people, and observation of related practices, a set of discourses are deconstructed which

interact at the agricultural and rural policy domain. They are ideal discourses, since it would be unlikely to find them exactly out there. The borders among discourses are fuzzy and coevolving. Nonetheless, the re-creation of the discourses turns into a fruitful exercise to shed light on the domain.

The methodology proposed consists of three stages. First of all, the main discourses are recreated and presented in the form of an inventory. Later on, the discourses are placed within a context of multi-level governance. Finally, an assessment is carried out so as to consider the extent to which each discourse fulfils the conditions of discursive success. Special attention is paid to the discourse of agroecology.

2.4.1.1. Multi-level governance

The social-constructivist approach makes sense of the first two characteristics of the agricultural and rural policy domain in Europe: cohabitation of different rationalities, and actors' incoherence. But there is a third characteristic, the dissimilar accesses to the different levels of the policy process for the coexisting rationalities. In order to make sense of the third characteristic, the social-constructivist approach is applied to multi-level governance. The same balance, which has been sought between the discursive creativity of actors and the constraining discourses, is here sought between the policy creativity of discourses and the institutional constraints on discourses.

The different moments of governance are conceived according to the main policy outcomes put forward along the policy process, taking into account the main kinds of decisions made. It is assumed that undertaking a policy is a multi-decisional process, with many decisions involved, from international regimes to implementations. Thus, the policy process is divided, to better understand it, into a set of moments in which relevant decisions are made. It is assumed that by dividing the complexity of the process into several crucial decisions, severe light is shed on the dynamics underlying the policy process. In each moment of governance the rules of the game may be different. The ways of arguing and the bargaining modes privileged may be different as well. That is, in each moment of governance the privileged ways of arguing and bargaining modes may disagree. Hence, the dominant practices, and their actors, may differ as well. The policy process is simplified by considering it as a set of relevant decisions, namely: international regimes, agenda settings, policy shapings, and implementations⁵⁰. These are, then, the different moments that make up the multi-level governance.

By international regimes we understand a set of decisions driving to reach deals among many governments. Although they are mainly signed by national governments, they are not promoted by national governments. Normally they are sponsored by international organisations and the sphere of activity is worldwide. This is the case of the UN-sponsored Rio Earth Summit. The bargaining mode privileged is trans-governmental. Although they consist of voluntary decisions

⁵⁰ It should be kept in mind that they are not placed in chronological order.

that national governments made, the scope transcends by a long way national boundaries, authorities and interests. There is considerable room for lobbying by other actors and practices, and this is why the bargaining mode here is considered trans-governmental. Due to the wide scope of the issues faced, and the fact that the practices of governments and large NGOs are the most influential, the way of arguing preferred is economic and social. That is, the reasoning follows the deployment of fundamental social and economic policy principles.

At the agenda-setting moment the decisions are also made among governments. However, the nature of the decisions made is binding, and the scope of the decisions is much smaller than in the case of international regimes. The particular governmental interests are much more visible and their defence is among the main priorities of the parties involved. These kinds of decisions set up the main policy procedures, agendas and priorities. Their character is quasi-constitutional. The intergovernmental conferences of the EU are examples of agenda-setting moments. Thus, the preferred bargaining mode becomes inter-governmental. The administrative way of arguing is privileged. It means the way of arguing preferred focuses on allocating the resources and services the polity manages.

Moments of governance	Relevant practices/actors	Ways of arguing privileged	Bargaining modes privileged	Examples
International regimes	WTO; FAO; Via Campesina; IFOAM; The Economist; Nature; Rio Earth Summit	Economic and social	Trans-governmental	WTO Uruguay Round
Agenda settings	European Council; The Cork Declaration; TRIPS; OECD Agriculture Ministers meeting; Commission President	Administrative	Inter-governmental	Agenda 2000
Policy settings	LEADER commission initiative; national governments; Agricultural Council; Special Committee on Agriculture	Administrative and technocratic	Inter-institutional	Regulation 1257/1999
Policy shapings	Trade Commissioner; Agriculture Commissioner; Declaration High-yield Farming; Wuppertal Institute; Oxfam; Unió de Pagesos; Plataforma Rural; Slow Food; Campaign against Global Brewery	Technocratic and consensual	Resource exchange	Definition of the agri-environmental measures, in the 22 nd article of the Rural Development Regulation 1257/1999
Implementations	The Economist; IRTA; CGIAR; cooperatives; LETS; peasants; Resembrando e Intercambiando	Consensual, economic and social	Resource exchange	The delivering of the economic assistance to the ecological stockbreeders of Pallars Sobirà

Table 2.4. Multi-level governance for the agricultural and rural policy domain in Europe

Policy-setting moments are characterised by negotiations among institutions. The decisions made here are a consequence of them. The purpose becomes to bring forward the policy agenda by means of deploying particular policy acts, which set up how particular policy issues should be dealt with. The EU directives are

examples of decisions made at the policy-setting moment. The preferred bargaining mode here is inter-institutional. The privileged way of arguing is administrative and technocratic. It is administrative since the allocation of the resources and services of the polity is central. Also, it is technocratic since here more concrete policy details are faced, and in order to cope with them specific procedures are developed that require more technocratic skills.

Policy-shaping decisions are completely focused on policy details. That is, they are concerned with adapting the policy acts into particular environments. They are concerned with deploying specific policy procedures to solve problems. An example of policy-shaping decision is recognised in the definition of the agri-environmental measures in the 22nd article of the Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/1999 17 May 1999 on support for rural development. The bargaining mode preferred is resource exchange. That is, different practices interact here by exchanging public support, expertise, information, etc. The privileged way of arguing becomes the technocratic one. The privileged way of arguing is also consensual, since due to the lack of resources there is a need to compromise, there is a tendency towards consensus.

Usually implementation is not included within the policy process. And it is assumed to be a direct process, which involves no reflection in any case. However, disregarding implementation obviously does not make any sense. Relevant decisions are made along with implementation. It entails many decisions, which are connected to solving the problems inherent in situations where general frameworks are applied to cope with particular circumstances. The privileged bargaining mode consists of resource exchanging among stakeholders. The preferred way of arguing is economic and social, and also consensual given that the lack of resources forces stakeholders to try to reach compromise solutions.

2.4.1.2. Conditions of discursive success

The conditions of discursive success are the properties hegemonic discourses contain. Therefore, they are the conditions a discourse should fulfil so as to grasp the understanding of a particular domain. The conditions of discursive success are the followings: (a) *institutionalization* and (b) *attractiveness*.

Attractiveness is the capacity of discourses of appealing to actors. Their cognitive capacity. The ability of discourses of pulling. In order to assess attractiveness, two factors are estimated: (a) structuration of the way of arguing, and (b) inclusiveness of the bargaining mode. On the one hand, it is considered that the more internally coherent, the more structured is the way of arguing in the given discourse. This is basically concerned with how the different nodal points are interlinked, and also to what extent the evolution of each nodal point follows a given direction. On the other hand, the more coherent the discourse and the surroundings are, the more inclusive the bargaining mode becomes. Inclusiveness of the bargaining mode refers to how many people, how many sectors of society

are considered to be within, are allowed to participate, are considered to have a relevant role, that is, are considered to be stakeholders.

Institutionalization is the capacity of discourses overcoming practices of micro-power, set up by other discourses and institutions. It is the capacity of discourses to accede to each moment of governance, where the different decisions are made. Institutionalization is thus understood as a particular construction, from discourses to institutions. Yet, in any case, it is not the only one that can be articulated. In so doing, partly following Foucault, two factors are considered in order to estimate institutionalization: firstly (a) *what* is it possible to say, that is, the proximity between the way of arguing preferred by the discourse and the way of arguing privileged in each moment of governance; and secondly, (b) *when* it is possible to speak, that is, the proximity between the bargaining mode preferred by the discourse and the bargaining mode privileged in each moment of governance.

3. Inventory of discourses within the agricultural and rural policy domain in Europe

The following inventory of discourses then does not pretend to be the only likely interpretation. On the contrary, it is just another framing. It constitutes an attempt to shed more light on the agricultural and rural policy domain dynamics in Europe.

Discourses overlap among themselves, and continuously coevolve. They all share some aspects and diverge in some others. The relationships among them will depend on which of those aspects are highlighted the most in each particular interaction, i.e. in each particular context. The following discourses have been deconstructed: (a) multifunctionality; (b) free-tradism; and finally (c) agroecology.

3.1. Discourse of multifunctionality

The début of multifunctionality as a nodal point took place thanks to one of the most significant products of the Rio Earth Summit: the comprehensive programme of action called Agenda 21. Here, a requirement for an agricultural policy review was supported⁵¹, so as to consider the multifunctional aspect of agriculture, particularly in regard to sustainable development. Some years later the nodal point was reused by the European Commission in order to boost the last CAP reform, the 2002 Mid Term Review, and avoid re-nationalisation. In November 1996, the first rural development conference was organized in Cork: *Rural Europe – Future Perspectives*. Here, the basis for the future EU rural policy was presented. For the first time a stake was held in Europe for the multifunctional nature of agriculture, given that “... *European citizens pay growing attention to the quality of life in general, and to questions of quality,*

⁵¹ United Nations (1992: chapter 14).

*health, safety, personal development and leisure in particular, and that rural areas are in a unique position to respond to these interests ...*⁵².

The Japanese traditional agriculture and self-sufficiency in rice production, the viability of marginal rural areas in Norway, the ecological agriculture in Austria, the viability of the countryside and food quality production through a rural policy in the EU, and even the eco-tourism in Mauritius⁵³, are the most highlighted by-products that can be used to defend multifunctional agriculture in the face of conventional monofunctional agriculture. Since prices reflect monofunctional agriculture, there is a need for governmental intervention to support farmers, to address this market failure, to protect them from liberalization of agricultural markets. It does not mean subsidizing and protecting agriculture blindly, rather upholding the role of agriculture as provider of goods and services. As Commissioner Fischler said: *“They are not subsidies, after all, but payment for services which Europe’s farmers have so far provided free of charge ...”*⁵⁴.

Multifunctional agriculture is considered the way to be followed towards sustainable development. Sustainable development is seen as *“maximising the net benefits of economic development, subject to maintaining the services and quality of natural resources over time”*⁵⁵. Natural capital stock should be constant over time. In order for this to be the case, governmental intervention is required, since the market by itself has proved to be incapable of reflecting multifunctionality conveniently. Expanding the productive capacity of a given economy, while preserving natural resources, is feasible by means of appreciating multifunctional agriculture.

The challenge of sustainable development is interpreted as a need for better knowledge and more control. It requires more data collection, planning and bureaucratic control. In so doing, towards sustainable rural development, eco-efficiency turns out to be a key tool. Eco-efficiency is: *“(...) concerned with the sustainable management or ‘wise use’ of natural resources and with the control of pollution not only in industrial contexts but also in agriculture, fisheries and forestry, resting on a belief in new technologies and the ‘internalisation of externalities’ as instruments for ecological modernization, backed up by industrial ecology and environmental economics”*⁵⁶. That is, the wise management of eco-efficiency is an ecological modernization.

The ecological crisis is seen as a consequence of the disregard of modern institutions. Nonetheless, existing political, economic and social institutions can internalise the care for the environment. There is a techno-institutional solution to the problem. Moreover, environmental protection is portrayed as a *positive-sum game*, which is recognised in the following motto: *pollution prevention*

⁵² European Conference on Rural Development “Rural Europe - Future Perspectives”, The Cork Declaration (1996).

⁵³ Mauritius, delegation from (2000).

⁵⁴ Fischler (1998:1).

⁵⁵ Pearce and Turner (1990:24).

⁵⁶ Martínez-Alier (2002:14).

pays⁵⁷. It is possible to carry out an ecologically sound economic growth. A sustainable development is feasible. A wise management of natural resources, and accurately-adjusted institutions - market, governments, science - emerge as the means on the way to sustainable agriculture. They will allow convenient internalisation of externalities. Ecological agriculture, fair trade, food safety turn out to be leading practices in this direction.

Ecological agriculture grew from the inheritance of the *classical movements of ecological agriculture* from the 1920s and 1940s in Japan, Europe and USA. The defence of organic fertilization in the face of agrochemicals is the main common point. Ecological agriculture in the sense used here⁵⁸ differs from other approaches by the requirement of: (a) regulated standards of production, (b) certification schemes, and (c) specific labelling systems. IFOAM, founded in 1972, is the reference organization, and it aims at “*leading, uniting and assisting the organic (ecological) movement*”⁵⁹.

From minor concerns - facilitating the foodstuffs trade and coping with food crises - arises now food safety as a nodal point. It is understood as the right of consumers to expect food to be of a good quality and suitable for consumption. Application of food quality standards, controls *from farm to table*, and providing consumers enough information, are the means considered necessary to meet the expectations.

Closely related to food safety, there is fair trade. Fair trade embraces different systems of agreements between consumers and producers, so as to ensure the prices paid to farmers and charged to consumers are fair, and reflect the full costs and benefits – especially in regards to environmental awareness and social justice. Fair trade initiatives emerged in the 1960s as a consequence of inequalities fostered by world trade. It was led by NGOs, which decided to ignore conventional market prices and started to offer better prices for products from Southern peasants, in order to enable decent living conditions for them.

Discourse of multifunctionality
• Multifunctionality
• Sustainable development
• Ecological modernization
• Ecological agriculture
• Food safety
• Fair trade

Table 3.1. Nodal points of the discourse of multifunctionality

⁵⁷ Hajer (1995:25-32).

⁵⁸ Depending on the country it is also referred to as: organic farming in UK, agriculture biologique in France, agricultura ecológica in Spain, Økologisk landbrug in Denmark, etc., according to the Council Regulation (EEC) No 2092/91 of 24 of June on organic production of agricultural products and indications.

⁵⁹ See: <http://www.ifoam.org>.

Among the measures claimed by fair trade supporters are: improving market access for poor countries; ending the cycle of subsidized agricultural over-production and export dumping by rich countries; and changing WTO rules so that non-exporting domestic food production can be protected. Thus, corporate benefits, workers' rights, and environmental concerns, can be enhanced together by means of promoting fair trade, which demonstrates successful market-based solutions to growing poverty and trade inequalities.

3.2. Discourse of free tradism

Free trade is a particularly influential and longstanding nodal point. It dates back to the origins of economic discipline, by the second half of the 18th century when the beginning of the industrialization was shaking some parts of Europe, particularly England and France. Linked to these changes, a cultural movement was trying to make sense of the new social order arising: the Enlightenment. In *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, Adam Smith, who is considered the father of economics, presented the idea that by specialising in specific productions rather than producing everything for the purpose of vast self-sufficiency, each nation would profit from free trade⁶⁰. From this can thus be concluded that trade protection generally hurts a country's economy.

Adam Smith was concerned with the enormous amount of what he considered useless or harmful regulations imposed by many governments. He set himself to cut away these restraints of labour, land and capital movement. He was supportive of giving free play to the *natural economic forces*, for minimal governmental intervention, in favour of free trade. That is, claiming for free movement of goods, money and people. However, it was one of the immediate followers of Adam Smith, David Ricardo (1772-1823)⁶¹, who expressed the non-interventionist tenets of free trade more expediently by deploying the *theory of comparative advantage*.

A freer trading regime predicates on a free market. In 1849, *The Economist* provided the following persuasive explanation of how a free market economy works: "*The self-interest of each merchant and trader leads to establish throughout all the ramified and vast transactions of commerce, a system of order such as no Government, however enlightened or strong, could ever conceive or ever enforce. Examined in detail, or looked at in total under the most general aspect, all the great branches of human industry are found replete with order, which growing from the selfish exertions of individuals, provides the whole. Experience has proved that this order is inevitably deranged when it is forcibly interfered with by the state*"⁶².

The CAP shows paradigmatically how painful excessive governmental interventions may be, by using one of their favourite gadgets: subsidies. The

⁶⁰ Smith (1776).

⁶¹ Ricardo (1817).

⁶² Quoted in Elliott (1991:3).

CAP consumes half of the EU budget – 46% - whereas farming accounts for barely 5% of EU employment and less than 2% of GDP. According to the OECD the EU in 1999 was paying out an average subsidy of \$17,000 to every full-time farmer⁶³. On average each person pays per year around \$338 in USA - because of the Farm Bill - and \$276 in EU - because of the CAP⁶⁴. Thus, the CAP and the Farm Bill by subsidising ewes, for instance, induce sheep farmers to breed ewes for the subsidy payment rather than fat lambs for the table. As a consequence of this distortion of market prices, the production and trade based on them will certainly not be efficient. Yields become lower, but they will cost more.

The role of the government remains to keep some basic social order and intervene in extraordinary circumstances when the market fails. The whole work of a market-driven economy relies on the existence of a property rights regime. Its defence then turns into a fundamental and a mandatory function of governments. Without a coherent property rights regime, the forces of competition do not have free play. In this case there is no idea in working towards an efficient allocation of resources of the free market situation and benefit from it.

There is an eternal scarcity related to people's willingness to prioritize human welfare. Only economic growth can promote it. Only development can satiate it. Development is basically understood to be linked to economic growth. As mentioned by Ricardo in the law of diminishing returns⁶⁵, only trade and innovation may turn scarcity upside down, and allow ever-lasting growth. Trade and especially scientific and technical innovation boost development, as this entails more investments in the society as a whole, which lead to higher incomes, which naturally imply an enhanced welfare, which is the exact purpose of exploiting the possibility of development.

The following gives two examples of promoting innovation, in this case by means of setting up suitable property rights regimes: the creation in 1961 of an intergovernmental organization called UPOV - International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants – which successfully promoted the development of improved seeds; and also the WTO agreement of TRIPS - trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights – signed in 1994 at the end of the Uruguay Round, encouraging the development of a new generation of improved seeds, genetically modified seeds.

Development is the way to enhance human welfare, to progress. Such a process, led by economic growth, implies the abandonment of traditional economies of self-sufficiency, to get industrialized, to encourage production. It means moving towards a market-driven economy, informed by science and technology. A higher production frees humanity from natural fetters: famines, natural disasters,

⁶³ The Economist (2001: 27-28).

⁶⁴ Quoting an EU Commission report from Patronat Català Pro Europa: <http://www.catalunyaeuropa.org>.

⁶⁵ Ricardo (1817).

overpopulation, scarcity of resources, etc., and also encourages human creativity, which is fundamental in the ever-lasting process of development. Development is seen as the turning of traditional economies – fundamentally agrarian – into modern economies – fundamentally industry based and led by private initiative. Development is then a linear progress from tradition to modernity, from scarcity to abundance, from nature to civilization.

The process of development led by the particular projection of modernity is called modernization. It promises “ (...) *control over nature through science, material abundance through superior technology, and effective government through rational social organization. Modernity also promise[s] peace and justice through a higher individual morality and superior collective culture to which all, free of material want, [will] ascend. Modernity, in short, promise[s] to transform the heretofore slow and precarious course of human progress onto a fast track*”⁶⁶.

Two main waves of the modernization of agriculture can be identified: the Green Revolution, and the Revolution of Biotechnology. The Green Revolution started in the 1960s. It consisted of the distribution of high-yield varieties of wheat, rice and maize, and a set of techniques to produce them. The purpose was to alleviate poverty in the underdeveloped world. It was drawn up by a set of research centres, called the Consultative Groups on International Agricultural Research - CGIAR. The Biotech Revolution has demonstrated recent advances in molecular biology and genetics, which greatly enhance the plant-breeders’ capacity to generate new traits in plants by means of using transgenes, i.e. genes hosted by a different organism. Transgenic plants are being engineered with useful traits such as: a higher yield, insect or herbicide tolerance, longer shelf life, better nutritious qualities, and the like.

Discourse of free tradism
• Free trade
• Neoliberalism
• Free market
• Development
• Modern agriculture

Table 3.2. Nodal points of the discourse of free tradism

Modern agriculture is the way. The intensive use of agrochemicals, machinery and equipment, irrigation, improved seed varieties and GM crops, and of modernizing schemes, provide the higher yields required. Norman Borlaug, who is considered to be the father of the Green Revolution and who received the Nobel Prize in 1970 for his lifetime work to put an end to world hunger, states

⁶⁶ Norgaard (1994:1).

that genetic engineering will result in a 50% increase in yields over the next 35 years⁶⁷.

3.3. Discourse of agroecology

The influence of environmentalism, the consciousness of energy shortage since the 1973 oil crisis, and the awareness of the Green Revolution failure, show the lack of capacity of conventional agronomy to deal with the challenges agricultural activity have faced, and is still dealing with today, namely: world hunger, environmental degradation, and energy inefficiency. It is now unavoidable that the disciplines engaged in agriculture be more permeable to the ecological challenge. Subsequently, as a consequence of the indissoluble nature of the relationship between social systems and ecological systems, not only the ecological dimension but also the social dimension were internalised within agroecology, which is now a trans-disciplinary field of research dealing with sustainable agriculture. The ecological crisis is a social crisis, and the social crisis is also of an ecological matter. Beyond the scientific domain, agroecology changed into a social movement. Agroecology thus turns out to be not only a handful of agricultural techniques, but also a programme of social transformation. Agroecological practices are considered the way to be followed towards a more sustainable agriculture.

Agroecological practices highlight the qualities of *organic fertilization*, like the classical movements of ecological agriculture. It is thus considered important to keep the fertility of the soil. Together with *varieties* in crops and farming techniques, the fertility of the soil is seen as fundamental to strengthen the resilience of agroecosystems and communities. Such a multifaceted peasant model is articulated within a very complex locally adapted network of knowledge, which is just a part of the whole framework that constitutes a community within its environment.

The internalization of these three dimensions - social, ecological, and productive - as an appropriate way to face agriculture, implies fostering a kind of agricultural activity tailored by human needs, instead of by an ill-measured productivity, which only focuses on few marketable commodities such as ewes. The transformative agenda of agroecology works to enhance diversity, which implies considering crucial empowering the local. Agroecological schemes end up by fostering bottom-up approaches. Thus, endogenous developments are promoted as processes of animating local capacities, and as development agendas capable of not undermining the conditions of sustainability, that is, diversity.

Facing the globalisation of neoliberal policies, driven by the interests of transnational corporations, the right of all communities to set their own food and agricultural policy is claimed. That is, food sovereignty, a food and agriculture

⁶⁷ Borlaug (1997:16).

policy filtered through their particular cultures and tailored by their specific requirements. The nodal point was coined by Via Campesina⁶⁸.

As a condition sine qua non food sovereignty, there is a question of fair distribution, fair access to the means of production used by agriculture - land, seeds, water, and air. Neoliberal policies, in pursuit of their particular understanding of efficiency, which tend to have blind confidence in private management, carries out an overwhelming campaign of privatisation of everything considered valuable by the market. However, the market is often wrong.

Without a doubt, the most ancient peasant demand has been the agrarian reform. It claims fair distribution of land, against its concentration in the hands of the few. *The land should belong to the person who cultivates it*, is a slogan that has been blowing in the wind throughout history. The land for those who cultivate it, and the CAP subsidies as well, since it is quite scandalous that the large landowners, who are not farmers, are the ones who profit the most.

However, it is not only the means of production which are being appropriated. Entire countries and their futures are being privatised due to the requirements of external debt payments. The external debt turns out to be a system of domination, neo-colonialism, exerted by international creditors - namely, the World Bank, the IMF, etc. - in order to take possession of the resources of developing countries. In the face of this mechanism of domination, which, for economic reasons, encourages southern countries to focus on exportation, the ecological debt is asserted. The ecological debt is thus contracted by industrialized countries with the rest of the countries, as a consequence of historical and present pillaging of natural resources, exportation of environmental impacts, and free utilisation of the global environmental space for waste disposal.

Discourse of agroecology
• Agroecology
• Sustainability
• Food sovereignty
• Agrarian reform
• Farmers' rights
• Ecological debt
• Solidary economy

Table 3.3. Nodal points of the discourse of Agroecology

⁶⁸ Via Campesina is an international movement which coordinates peasant organizations of small and middle-class producers, agricultural workers, rural women, and indigenous communities from Asia, Africa, America, and Europe. It is integrated by national and regional organizations whose autonomy is respected. For more information, cf. <http://www.viacampesina.org>.

But, the scope of food sovereignty does not end at the production level. Distribution and consumption should be considered, as the ecological debt shows. The requirements for sustainability should not be restricted to the production level. The distribution and consumption spheres are also taken into account by experiences of solidary economy - LETS, cooperatives of agroecological consumption and production and the like. Economy means allocating scarce resources within a community. Solidary economy then proposes a shift in the dominant standard of economic assessment, from chrematistic⁶⁹ efficiency towards solidarity and mutual support. It is an economy tailored to fulfil human needs, rather than recreating them.

4. Assessment of the conditions of discursive success

Below I assess the extent to which each of the three discourses fulfils the conditions of discursive success. In section 2.4.1.1, I consider the ways of arguing and the bargaining modes privileged in each moment of governance. In order to assess the conditions of discursive success, we must also know the characteristics of the arguing and the bargaining modes preferred by each discourse. Since the inventory has already been done, it is now possible to extrapolate them.

By the way of arguing of a discourse, I understand the rationality of the discourse, the underlying logic. That is, the way of arguing of a discourse means what the discourse takes into account when making decisions. It delimits what is inside and what is kept outside. In turn, the bargaining mode suggests the model of participation inherent, who is allowed to decide. This thus refers to the underlying model of democracy. Table 4.1 shows the bargaining modes and ways of arguing preferred attributed to each discourse.

	Agroecology	Multifunctionality	Free-tradism
Way of arguing preferred	Social and ecological	Administrative	Economic
Bargaining mode preferred	Social	Institutional	Chrematistic

Table 4.1. Ways of arguing and bargaining modes preferred by each discourse

Due to the relevance of appreciating not only ecological, but also social diversity, the way of arguing of the discourse of agroecology is seen as one of social and ecological matters. I conclude that it prefers a social bargaining mode, provided that its transformative agenda revolves around a prioritising local autonomy. As regards the discourse of multifunctionality, owing to the confidence shown in current institutions to deal with the present challenges, the preferred bargaining mode is seen as an institutional mode, whereas the preferred way of arguing is administrative. As regards the discourse of free tradism, the bargaining mode preferred is chrematistic, given that the capacity for influencing decisions is tightly linked to the capacity for handling money. The way of arguing preferred

⁶⁹ In relation to the Aristotle's distinction between chrematistics – getting wealth - and economics – household management.

is economic, since the allocation of scarce resources available is the main driving force taken into account.

Below I assess what each of the three discourses look like in the mirror offered by the conditions of discursive success. That is, the institutionalisation and the attractiveness of the three discourses are considered. Finally, some considerations are made so as to enhance the discourse of agroecology.

4.1. Institutionalization of the discourse of multifunctionality

The administrative way of arguing and the institutional bargaining mode preferred by the discourse of multifunctionality goes rather well at the international regime moment of governance. There, the way of arguing privileged is economic and social, while the bargaining mode is trans-governmental. It should be kept in mind that the nodal point of sustainable development was firstly put forward at the World Conservation Strategy, and at the UN-sponsored Conference on Human Environment, “Rio Earth Summit”, and the report *Our Common Future*. Also relevant, concerning the nodal point of multifunctionality, was the FAO conference on *the Multifunctional Character of Agriculture and Land* held in Maastricht in 1999. Nor should the influence of the set of countries called *Friends of Multifunctionality* be dismissed, as they have been exerting an important influence at each WTO meeting since the one held in Seattle in 1999. The British newspaper *The Guardian* has also been pushing for more food safety, claiming it is time to get away from the cheap food policy⁷⁰. Likewise, the role of IFOAM should be taken into account, since it is a reference organization for a worldwide ecological agriculture movement.

However, the relevance of the discourse at the agenda-setting moment is much stronger, as the 1998 communiqué of the OECD agriculture ministers’ meeting claiming for a multifunctional agriculture shows. Analogous, but perhaps stronger conclusions, can be drawn from the 1997 European Council meeting in Luxemburg. Here, the priority of upholding the *European model of agriculture* was stated, based on its multifunctional character, as claimed some months before in Cork by the first rural development conference “Rural Europe – Future Perspectives”. Accordingly, the EU rural policy was set up, becoming the second pillar of the CAP. In line with this, in a speech to the European Parliament 5 October 1999, the Commission President Romano Prodi declared the nodal point of food safety having become a top priority for the EU. The administrative way of arguing matches perfectly the also administrative way of arguing privileged at the agenda-setting moment. The institutional preferred bargaining mode suits completely the inter-governmental mode privileged as well.

The ways of arguing and the bargaining modes privileged by the policy-setting moment of governance also perfectly suit those preferred by the discourse. The nodal point of multifunctionality is assumed to be one of the leading principles of the agricultural and rural policies of several governments like, for instance:

⁷⁰ See, for instance, the following articles: Winterson (2001), Fort (2003), Muir (2003) and Purvis (2003).

Austria, Norway and Germany. Crucial in spreading the discourse in the policy-setting moment are the Council Regulations 2092/91⁷¹ concerning the nodal point of ecological agriculture, and the Council Regulation 1257/99⁷² which sets up a rural policy led by the nodal point of multifunctionality. But even more relevant has been the success of the LEADER Commission initiative – Links between Actions for the Development of the Rural Economy. Despite the tiny amount of money involved, it has played an important role in introducing multifunctional rural policies in countries where it was not already established. Here the case of Spain is interesting, as the government launched a parallel initiative, called PRODER, to cover regions that were not included in the LEADER initiative.

The words of the EU Commissioner in line with multifunctionality and ecological agriculture are numerous, as is the case of the Catalan farmers' union Unió de Pagesos. The influence exerted by the Codex Alimentarius Commission on food safety has also been relevant. It has become an internationally respected reference point on food standards and codes of practices to protect consumers' health. Likewise, the influence of the NGO Oxfam on spreading the nodal point of fair trade over the policy-shaping moment of governance, with campaigns like *Make Trade Fair*, should be acknowledged. The role of the Wuppertal Institute has also been influential in strengthening the discourse of multifunctionality, by means of a line of work concerned with enhancing the nodal point of ecological modernization. Particularly outstanding was the institute's collaboration with the Club of Rome which led to the work *Factor Four*. Thus, the preference for technocratic and consensual ways of arguing as well as resource exchange bargaining modes suits the discourse of multifunctionality rather well.

At the implementation moment, the way of arguing privileged is consensual, social and economic, whereas the one preferred by the discourse of multifunctionality is administrative. These two ways of arguing do not agree with each other to any large extent. Nevertheless, resource exchange bargaining modes fit the institutional bargaining mode held by the discourse better. Thus, the system based on subsidies driving the CAP becomes a way of working that suits resource exchange bargaining modes rather well. The subsidy-centred system affects many farmers and some other people indirectly. Its capacity to enhance the discourse of multifunctionality at the implementation moment should not be dismissed. In fact, it is very important, and the discourse of multifunctionality turns out to be primary for farmers in claiming subsidies. Also *The Guardian* has been pushing for more food safety, claiming it is time to get away from cheap food policy⁷³.

4.2. Institutionalization of the discourse of free tradism

At the international regime moment of governance the privileged way of arguing and the bargaining mode - economic and social, and trans-governmental

⁷¹ European Council Regulation (1991).

⁷² European Council Regulation (1999).

⁷³ See, for instance, the following articles from *The Guardian*: Winterson (2001), Fort (2003), Muir (2003) and Purvis (2003).

respectively – fit the discourse of free tradism rather well. The discourse of free tradism prefers an economic way of arguing and a chrematistic bargaining mode. It is shown by the influence exerted here by the campaigning of some journals, like *The Economist* or the *Wall Street Journal*, in favour of free trade, a free market and modern agriculture. Nor should one dismiss the influence of some scientific magazines like *Nature*⁷⁴, *New Scientist* and *Science* in claiming for modern agriculture schemes. Also relevant is the role of the World Economic Forum at Davos in spreading the neoliberal recipe to promote *strong sustained economic growth*⁷⁵. In any case, the key point in understanding the wide spreading of the discourse of free tradism at this moment is the role played by the Bretton Woods organizations. They are an astonishing mechanism in spreading the neoliberal prescriptions, often known as the Washington consensus, around the world.

The discourse is also quite powerful at the agenda-setting moment, although its strength is lower in the agricultural and rural policy domain than in other domains. However, the preferred economic way of arguing and the chrematistic bargaining mode seem to fit the privileged administrative way of arguing and the inter-governmental bargaining mode at this moment rather well. Thus, it is understandable why, in order to enhance European cohesion, priority was given to promoting the free market area over some other considerations, social and environmental for instance. At this moment, the role played by the UPOV intergovernmental organization or the WTO's TRIPS agreement in promoting modern agriculture, by encouraging the development of new generations of improved seeds, is also relevant in boosting the discourse of free tradism.

At the policy-setting moment, the privileged administrative and technocratic way of arguing, and above all the inter-institutional bargaining mode, seem not to suit the ones preferred by the discourse to a very large extent. The scope of the discourse at this moment is related to indirect influences of other policies on the agricultural and rural policy domain, stemming mainly from regimes like trade or economy.

The preferred ways of arguing and the bargaining modes of the discourse of free tradism are closer to the ones privileged at the policy-shaping moment. This, then, is why the opinions stated by the Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy, who favours free trade in the agricultural domain, are rather influential here. In line with the latter, there is also the lobbying of some interest groups in favour of modern agriculture, as shows for instance the declaration in support of *Protecting Nature with High-yield Farming and Forestry*, signed by a broad coalition of food, environment, farming and forestry experts. The lobbying carried out directly in Brussels by big enterprises of the agri-food sector, demanding freer trade, a freer market and supporting modern agriculture, turns out to be more

⁷⁴ See, for instance, the papers of Trewavas (2002, 1999).

⁷⁵ See: <http://www.webforum.org>.

influential. The role played by some agriculture research centres in modernizing agriculture, like the CGIARs, is also relevant.

At the implementation moment of governance, the discourse fits the privileged ways of arguing and bargaining much better. Here, again, the role of journals like *The Economist* and the *Wall Street Journal* is relevant in favouring free tradism. The role of some agriculture research and extension institutes has been fundamental in spreading modern agriculture. In Catalonia, this is the case of the IRTA. But agriculture research and extension are not only carried out by public institutions. They are increasingly being privatised. Implementation turns into a moment where many agri-food enterprises spread their modernizing schemes over farmers. Finally, it should be kept in mind that free trade began as a popular claim for cheaper and more abundant food, and today it is still to some extent such a claim.

4.3. Institutionalization of the discourse of agroecology

At the international regime moment of governance, the discourse of agroecology fits rather well with the privileged bargaining mode and way of arguing. The social and ecological preferred way of arguing fits the economic and social way of arguing reasonably well, whereas the social bargaining mode preferred suits the trans-governmental bargaining mode privileged very well. Thus, we should not be surprised by the growing power of the international movement Via Campesina, which is more and more often recognised in international forums through their coordination of peasant organizations of small and middle-scale producers, agricultural workers, rural women, and indigenous communities. Via Campesina makes demands along the lines of food sovereignty and an agrarian reform. Also, at this moment, the question of farmers' rights was raised by FAO in its Resolution 5/89 of the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources.

The way of arguing and the bargaining mode privileged at the agenda-setting moment of governance do not fit the discourse of agroecology very well: an inter-governmental versus a social bargaining mode; an administrative versus a social and ecological way of arguing. Consequently, it is pretty difficult to find the discourse of agroecology at this moment. In part, the *Cork Declaration - A living countryside*⁷⁶, claiming another rural policy in Europe by means of fostering more transparent, participated and bottom-up approaches, may be considered.

At the policy-setting moment again, the discourse of agroecology does not go well with the privileged way of arguing and the bargaining mode. The discourse does not suit the administrative and technocratic way of arguing and the inter-institutional bargaining mode privileged here. Consequently, it is difficult for the discourse of agroecology to extend towards the policy-setting moment. Nevertheless, the success of the LEADER Commission initiative, in promoting

⁷⁶ European Conference on Rural Development "Rural Europe – Future Perspectives" (1996).

integrated rural policies, may be considered here. Despite the tiny amount of money involved, it has raised new policy issues and stimulated the search for new forms of co-operation and action.

The policy-shaping moment of governance fits the discourse of agroecology rather well. The technocratic and consensual privileged way of arguing work well with the social and ecological way of arguing preferred by the discourse of agroecology. However, the resource exchange privileged bargaining mode suits the social one preferred by agroecology even better. Thus, the interventions of the discourse at this moment are fairly numerous: the French union *Confédération Paysanne* claiming for food sovereignty; the Danish campaign against the growth of the global brewery giants, in favour of fair trade; the work of the eco-gastronomic movement *Slow Food*; *SOC*, an Andalusian labourers' union campaigning for an agrarian reform; or the *Plataforma Rural*, a heterogeneous Spanish alliance for a living countryside, which promotes agroecology.

Finally, the implementation moment of governance suits the discourse of agroecology quite well. It is quite favoured at this moment by the consensual and social privileged way of arguing, and by the resource exchange privileged bargaining mode. Hence, quite substantial evidence of solidary economies may be found here: *LETS*, cooperatives of agroecological consumption and production, etc. Also, many areas, where the traditional agriculture still is alive, are regions where the discourse of agroecology is strong: *dehesas* in Southern Spain, the Portuguese *montados*, the agro-pastoralism in the German Black Forest, traditional hill sheep production in UK uplands, or extensive cattle raising in the Pyrenees. Furthermore, other experiences that go with the discourse of agroecology should be taken into account. This is the case of the *Red de Semillas Resembrando e Intercambiando*, promoted by the *Plataforma Rural* in Spain, which is a network aiming at fostering conservation of local agricultural biodiversity and ecological production of seeds by means of promoting re-sowing and exchange among peasants. It carries out what farmers' rights claim.

4.4. Attractiveness of the discourse of multifunctionality

As far as the structuration of the way of arguing, the discourse of multifunctionality offers a rather coherent scheme to the agri-food and rural scenes. It is claimed that proper adjustments of currently dominant institutions – the market, governments and modern science – present challenges, which may be tackled effectively. Thus, present challenges are faced by means of creating specialised departments within governments, progressing in science and technology, and finally internalising externalities within prices (by adding taxes to the prices). Ecological modernization is applied to cope with the ecological crisis, food safety with food crises, fair trade with the inequalities fostered by world trade, ecological agriculture with the abuse of agrochemicals, and sustainable development with the undesirable consequences of economic growth. To some extent it has been done successfully, and the discourse has been spread

around. This is the case with the rural or multifunctional agriculture policy in Europe, as the previously mentioned LEADER initiative shows.

Agriculture is considered as a special entity. It is not another industrial sector, and it should be approached accordingly. Agriculture provides society with numerous services and goods: food, employment, a cradle of cultures, scenic landscapes, infrastructured communities, etc. Furthermore, due to the direct dependence of agriculture on uncontrollable natural forces, it becomes compulsory to buffer agriculture and rural life in order to alleviate the unpredictable natural fluctuations which affect the provision of these services and goods. Hence, the discourse of multifunctionality suggests a deployment of scientific reasonings, policies and price premiums in conformity with the appreciation of multifunctionality.

The discourse of multifunctionality offers a fairly structured way of arguing. The will of using the capacity of dominant institutions to mobilise resources and rally legitimacy is shared by all nodal points, as is the proposal to meet present challenges through some adjustments of these institutions. In addition, there is confidence in the feasibility of optimising apparently contradictory objectives: economic growth, social fairness and sustainability.

Undoubtedly, these institutions have proved to be beneficial over the years and in the face of numerous challenges. However, their hegemony may become unattractive if fully extended, since then they will be applied to circumstances, which they cannot cope with suitably. Thus, the market is not always allocating scarce resources properly: what happens, for instance, when property rights are fuzzy, externalities huge and stakeholders cannot accede to the marketplace? The market fails. Modern science is not always the best way of acquiring knowledge either: what happens, for instance, when private money drives a university research agenda? Or what happens when scientific endeavour is led by sectarian interests instead of by the quality of the research? Modern science fails as well. And governments do not always take the majority will of society into account: what happens, for instance, when only powerful enterprises reach the lobbying room? What happens when voting every four years is not enough to transmit societal needs to politicians? Then governments fail. They do not decide according to the majority will of society. They allocate resources unfairly. They spread useless knowledge. Hence, the approach based on more control, more bureaucracy, and more certifications, is not always appropriate. All this constitutes sources of unattractiveness.

Furthermore, fair trade focuses only on luxury goods, so fair trade is not so fair. Ecological agriculture only means a reduction in the use of agrochemicals, so ecological agriculture is not so ecological. And sustainable development turns out to mean a green-washed economic growth, and thus sustainable development is not so sustainable. Although the adjustments proposed by the discourse are in attractive directions, they are often limited or even mere window-dressing. Thus,

it seems naïve to propose to solve food crises only through more quality controls, since more control benefits large farms, which in turn are where the food crises come from.

Concerning the inclusiveness of the bargaining mode, the discourse of multifunctionality proves to have little connection as well. As it trusts in the representativity and legitimacy of the currently dominant institutions, it mainly strengthens governments. Hence, it assumes a hierarchical, top-down arrangement to decision-making, which seems to be inadequate to cope with long futures and dynamic and complex environments. An administrative elite is the most enhanced unit to make decisions. Scientific and economic elites are also relevant, but to a lesser extent since they are restricted to a more or less influential advisory role. A paternalistic focus is then deployed. It is not easy to justify this to the less benefited sectors. This is the case of the CAP subsidies, which benefit farmers but penalise consumers and tax-payers. Nevertheless, the multifunctional nature of agriculture and rurality turns out to be a rather coherent justification, since the sectors who do not benefit directly seem to benefit indirectly, by eating higher quality food, enjoying beautiful landscapes, being employed or having the chance to live in small villages, etc.

4.5. Attractiveness of the discourse of free tradism

By freeing market and trade, the forces of competition act freely. In such circumstances the human spirit gets rid of unnecessary weight. Once freed, economic growth, i.e. development, is guaranteed through scientific innovation, effective governments and efficient allocation of resources. It is the way of arguing underlying the nodal points, which make up the discourse of free tradism.

However, it is quite obvious that economic growth does not solve all social and ecological problems. The growing production of goods and services generated by economic growth may be deficiently allocated and may be achieved by polluting the environment. Thus, economic growth guarantees inequalities and not necessarily a better. One of the main mottos of the discourse of free tradism is ending hunger in the world. However, the two fundamental waves of agricultural modernization – Green and Biotech revolutions - not only have not succeed in ending the food shortage, but rather quite the contrary.

The foundations of the discourse of free tradism were close to the birth of economics. Nonetheless, the classical economics of that time show meaningful differences to the present neo-classical economics. Similarly, the liberalism of the 18th century is also quite different from the current neoliberalism. The free movement of goods, money and people, as claimed by Adam Smith, is rather different to what present neoliberalism requires. Free movement of people is no more a priority. The concern of the 18th century liberalism was mainly against the dangers of monopoly. When people in England demanded “*free trade, cheap*

bread’, it was to repeal the Corn Laws, which kept prices too high, benefiting the few.

The importance given to guaranteeing freedom of the forces of competition is shared by all nodal points of free tradism. However, free tradism, which once was a social movement against monopoly, has turned into a scheme of economic relationships tailored by TNCs. A paradigmatic case is the one of the so-called *life industries*, where the concentration, as much vertical as horizontal, in the agri-food sectors is beyond belief. Thus, again, a free market as well as free trade seem to be not so free, and neoliberalism seem to be not so liberal. The anti-monopoly awareness becomes difficult to detect, when noticing that development and modern agriculture are concerned with fostering large and capital-intensive farms and the dismantling of small estates. The tendency to concentration is obvious. The discourse of free tradism supports an agri-food scheme in which the production is thought to feed the whole population, while the distribution is tailored just to supply a small demand. In conclusion, arguments in favour of free-tradism are structured in a barely coherent way.

Likewise, the performance of the discourse in relation to the inclusiveness of the bargaining mode is rather poor. It is assumed that there is the need to reach a minimum level of development to deploy some sensitivities, like, for instance, paying attention to the environment and food safety. Hence, the opinion of people with no relation to these fields should be considered less important. It is believed that the path of development, led by the modernization project, results in a higher individual morality and a superior collective culture. The process of development consists of just one path. It is the path, which developed countries have followed. Development then turns into a project of westernisation, i.e. a project of urbanization, which entails disregarding a great deal of cultures and populations. The bargaining mode of the discourse of free tradism is not inclusive at all. Only an economic elite is allowed to participate meaningfully in the decision-making processes.

4.6. Attractiveness of the discourse of agroecology

First of all, it should be kept in mind that the foundations of the discourse of agroecology are situated in the modern science domain. However, the width of the reality faced led to the emergence of new dimensions. Thus, the discourse of agroecology, which was born around the 1970s close to the first step of agrarian sciences, turned into a social movement in the 1990s. The three dimensions of agroecology - the scientific basis of sustainable agriculture; the endogenous development scheme; and the social movement – show that the structuration of the way of arguing carried out is of a high quality.

The discourse of agroecology attempts to combine modernity with tradition, and modern science with other forms of knowledge. It is also concerned with learning from different cultures, and not getting locked in just one. The whole humanity will benefit greatly if all cultures are willing to share their knowledge.

Throughout all nodal points that conform to the discourse of agroecology, there are some common features. Solidarity and mutual support are seen as the crucial factors in a society, as they enhance the capacity of all communities to last and face the coming challenges. Equality and fairness are considered essential in allowing solidarity and mutual support to arise. The obsession for equality becomes a driving force. It may be observed under all nodal points of the discourse.

Regarding the bargaining mode, the discourse of agroecology grows to be strongly inclusive. Along all nodal points there is a high awareness for empowering people, by prioritising the local, in order to tend to a more equalitarian society. Thus, the agrarian reform reclaims land for more people; ecological debt, financial debt for less people; agroecology, an agriculture with more peasants; food sovereignty, an agriculture and rural policy tailored by the needs of more people; farmers' rights, seeds for more farmers; fair trade, trade to fulfil the requirements of more people; and, finally, solidary economy, allocations of resources and services taking into account even more people.

Emphasis is placed on participation and transparency along the policy processes. Bottom-up approaches are encouraged. All perspectives are considered legitimate. The discourse of agroecology thus promotes giving voice to all stakeholders, considering all realities involved. The bargaining mode of the discourse of agroecology then seems to be highly inclusive.

4.7. Conclusions

As has been shown up to now in section 4, and it is summarized below in table 4.2, the construction of multifunctional problems has enhanced the most within the agricultural and rural policy domain in Europe. The discourse of multifunctionality is the only one showing relevant institutionalization in all moments of governance. In international regimes in policy shapings and in policy implementations, the institutionalization of the three discourses is similar, that is, none of them dominates. However, in the rest of the moments, in policy settings and in policy shapings, the discourse of multifunctionality becomes hegemonic, particularly in the policy-setting moment. The dominance of multifunctionality in these two moments brings about a bottleneck effect, which seems to guarantee the most relevant role in this domain to the discourse of multifunctionality. The situation of a policy-implemented deficit and a policy-set inflation thus seems to suggest so. The discourse of free tradism shows significant institutionalization in all moments, except for the policy-setting moment. Concerning the discourse of agroecology, the institutionalisation is important, except for the policy-setting and agenda-setting moments.

In the agricultural and rural policy domain in Europe, arguing and bargaining with the discourse of multifunctionality turns out to be privileged most of the times. Arguing and bargaining differently comes at a cost. Thus, the internalisation of positive and negative externalities within prices and the

creation of specified departments and fields of study to face the challenges arising constitute the preferred approaches. Other approaches, claiming for dismantling or at least minimizing the roles of these institutions, are highly contested. Hence, experiences of solidary economy or traditional practices requiring small markets, decentralised governments and more modest modern science interventions are marginalized. This also happens to practices that empower TNCs over governments, and that make the market and modern science be driven according to their interests as well.

International regimes	+++	+	++
Agenda settings	++	+++	-
Policy settings	-	+++	-
Policy shapings	++	++	++
Implementation	++	++	+++
	Free tradism	Multifunctionality	Agroecology

Table 4.2. Institutionalization of the three discourses in the agricultural and rural policy domain in Europe*

The discourse of multifunctionality, then, due to the high institutionalization that enjoys, turns out to be the most optimistic of the three discourses. It favours the status quo. But a growing disenchantment for current dominant institutions seems, to some extent, to be spreading. This undermines the attractiveness of the discourse. Thus, despite high institutionalisation, the discourse of multifunctionality does not enjoy a similar degree of attractiveness.

Free tradism benefits from remarkably high institutionalisation, it is in second place after the discourse of multifunctionality. However, the attractiveness of free tradism is the lowest. It is hardly inclusive. Also, the way of arguing shows fundamental incoherencies that betray the character of the discourse, mainly: an anti-monopoly concern which has turned into fostering pro-monopoly practices. Nevertheless, as regards attractiveness, an important success should be highlighted. Nowadays, nobody proclaims himself a protectionist nor wants to be pointed out as a protectionist. The discourse of free tradism has been able to keep the capacity of deciding what is and is not protectionism. Adding the stigma of protectionism to the other two discourses is one of the main sources of attractiveness held by the discourse of free tradism.

The discourse of agroecology emerges out of a consciousness of a crisis, which is considered to be not only of an ecological character but also of a social one. The discourse of agroecology arises willing to open up alternatives to the dominant discourses, which are regarded as the root of the crisis. Obviously, then, the

* It is considered that the more crosses, the more proximity between ways of arguing and bargaining modes of moments and discourses.

institutionalisation of the discourse of agroecology is the lowest, especially regarding the policy-setting and the agenda-setting moments of governance. At the rest of the moments, however, the institutionalisation of the discourse is rather significant.

	Structuration of the way of arguing	Inclusiveness of the bargaining mode
Multifunctionality	++	++
Free tradism	++	+
Agroecology	+++	++++

Table 4.3. Attractiveness of the three discourses in the agricultural and rural policy domain in Europe*

At odds with the discourses of free tradism and multifunctionality, agroecology is not so captivated by the charm of the modernization project. Thus, it consists of an attempt to combine the project with some other aspects that modernity marginalizes. Thus, the discourse of agroecology deploys the following qualities: (a) the promotions of environmentally friendly policies, assuming communities are included within ecological systems; (b) the guarantee of transparency along the policy processes, opening the policy processes to stakeholders, (c) the promotion of participation in policy processes, considering all perspectives legitimated; and, finally, (d) the claimed utilization of information of a high quality, integrating different forms of knowledge, and not only the one of modern science. The evolution of agroecology is fundamentally different from the other two discourses. Agroecology is an attempt to live together in harmony with the underlying complexity. The discourse, as shown in figure 4.3, turns out to be highly attractive.

The main weakness of the discourse of agroecology lies in its institutionalization, particularly as regards the policy-setting and the agenda-setting moments of governance, which are ruled by the discourse of multifunctionality. However, the CAP crises and the emergence of the EU rural policy constitute an open door for new discourses to spread over these moments. Agroecology might be there. In this line, the discourse of agroecology strives to differ from the discourse of multifunctionality. Yet, the discourse of agroecology often wastes too much effort in differing from free tradism. Continuing to increase this difference does not benefit the discourse of agroecology additionally, since it already is a well-defined type of discourse. If agroecology wants to have a more relevant role in the agricultural and rural policy domain, it is better for it to work towards increasing the differences the discourse of multifunctionality. Today the appearances of these two discourse types coincide to some extent and are thus less well-defined and transparent. There is much confusion here. In such

* It is considered that the more crosses, either the more structured the way of arguing or the more inclusive the bargaining mode.

situations, the discourse with the highest institutionalisation ends up being the most benefited, and it draws on the attractiveness from the other discourse. In conclusion, it is thus fundamental to differentiate between agroecology and ecological agriculture, between sustainability and sustainable development, between food sovereignty and multifunctionality, and so on.

Bibliography

- Addams, H. and Proops, J., 2000. *Social Discourse and Environmental Policy. An application of Q Methodology*. Edward Elgar. UK.
- Andersen, N.Å. and Kjær, P., 1996. *Institutional Construction and Change: An Analytical Strategy of Institutional History*. COS-rapport (5/96).
- Bacchi, C., 2000. *Policy as Discourse: what does it mean? where does it get us?* Discourse: studies in the cultural politics of education, Vol. 21, No. 1, 45-57.
- Barry, J. and Proops, J., 1999. *Seeking sustainability discourses with Q methodology*. Ecological Economics 28: 337-345.
- Borlaug, N.E., 1997. *Feeding a World of 10 Billion People: the Miracle Ahead*. Lecture presented at De Montford University. 6 May. Leicester, United Kingdom.
- Caporaso, J., 1998. *Regional Integration Theory: Understanding Our Past and Anticipating Our Future*. Journal of European Public Policy, 5, 1: 1-16.
- van Dijk, T. A. (ed.), 1985. *Handbook of Discourse Analysis*. Academic Press. New York.
- Dingler, J., 2003. *The Discursive Nature of Nature*. Paper presented at the conference “Does Discourse Matter? Power, Discourse and Institutions in the Sustainability Transition”. 11-13 July. Hamburg, Germany.
- Dryzek, J.S., 1997. *The Politics of the Earth. Environmental Discourses*. Oxford University Press. Oxford.
- Elliott, N., 1991. “To Further Free Trade Principles”: *Origins of The Economist*. The Freeman: Ideas on Liberty, January, Vol. 41, No. 1, 1-3.
- Escobar, A., 1999. *After Nature. Steps to an Antiessentialist Political Ecology*. Current Anthropology. Vol. 40, Number 1, February, 1-30.
- Escobar, A., and Álvarez, S.E. (eds), 1992. *The Making of Social Movements in Latin America*. Westview Press. Oxford.
- European Conference on Rural Development “Rural Europe - Future Perspectives”, 1996. *The Cork Declaration, a living countryside*. 7-9 November. Cork, Ireland.
- European Council Regulation (EEC) No. 2092/91 of 24 June 1991 on organic production of agricultural products and indications.
- European Council Regulation (EEC) No. 1257/99 of 17 May 1999 on support for rural development.
- Fairclough, N. and Wodak, R., 1997. *Critical Discourse Analysis*. In: Teun van Dijk (ed.), 1997. *Discourse as Social Interaction*, vol.2 (258-84).Sage. London, 258-84.
- Fairclough, N., 1992. *Discourse and Social Change*. Polity. Cambridge.
- Fischler, F., 1998. *Future of European Agricultural Policy*. Speech at the University of Wageningen. 16 April. Wageningen, the Netherlands.
- Fort, M., 2003. *Food has four seasons*. The Guardian, 24 May.
- Foucault, M., 1980. *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings*. Edited by C. Gordon. Pantheon. New York.
- Foucault, M., 1975. *Discipline and Punish. The birth of the prison*, 1977 trans. Penguin. Harmondsworth.
- Frouws, J., 1998. *The Contested Redefinition of the Countryside. An Analysis of Rural Discourse in The Netherlands*. Sociologia Ruralis, Vol. 38, No. 1, 54-68.
- Haas, E., 1964. *Beyond the Nation-State: Functionalism and International Organization*. Stanford University Press. Stanford.
- Haas, P., 1992. *Epistemic Communities and International Policy Coordination*. International Organization, 46, 1: 1-35.

- Hajer, M.A., 1995. *The Politics of Environmental Discourse. Ecological Modernization and the Policy Process*. Oxford University Press. Oxford.
- Halfacree, K.H., 1995. *Talking About Rurality: Social Representations of the Rural as Expressed by Residents of Six English Parishes*. Journal of Rural Studies, Vol. 11, No. 1: 1-20.
- Halkier, H., 2003. *Discourse, Institutionalism and Public Policy. Theory, Methods and a Scottish Case Study*. Center for International Studies, Aalborg University. Discussion Paper No. 23/2003.
- Jaworski, A. and Coupland, N., 1999. *The Discourse Reader*. Routledge. London.
- Johnstone, B., 2002. *Discourse Analysis*. Blackwell Publishers. Oxford.
- Jones, O., 1995. *Lay Discourses of the Rural: Developments and Implications for Rural Studies*. Journal of Rural Studies, Vol. 11, No.1: 35-49.
- Jordan, A., 1999. *The implementation of EU environmental policy: a policy problem without a political solution?* Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy, Vol. 17: 69-90.
- Koselleck, R., 1982. *Begriffsgeschichte and Social History*. Economy & Society, 11 (4): 405-27.
- Laclau, E. and Mouffe, C., 1985. *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy. Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*. The Thetford Press Ltd. Great Britain.
- Levi-Strauss, C., 1963. *Structural Anthropology*, publ. 1976. Basic Books. New York.
- Litfin, K.T., 1994. *Ozone Discourses. Science and Politics in Global Environmental Cooperation*. Columbia University Press. New York.
- Martínez Alier, J., 2002. *The Environmentalism of the Poor. A Study of Ecological Conflicts and Valuation*. Edward Elgar. UK.
- Mauritius, delegation from, 2000. *Developing Countries and Non-Trade Concerns*. Conference paper from the International conference on Non-Trade concerns in Agriculture. July. Ullensvang, Norway,
- Moravcsik, A., 1993. *Preferences and power in the European Community: a liberal intergovernmentalist approach*. Journal of Common Market Studies, 31, 4: 473-524.
- Muir, H., 2003. *Meat mafia puts lives at risk, say health officials*. The Guardian, 24 November.
- Norgaard, R.B., 1994. *Development Betrayed. The end of progress and a coevolutionary revisioning of the future*. Routledge. Great Britain.
- Orwell, G., 1949. *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Secker and Warburg. London.
- Pearce, D.W. and Turner, R.K., 1990. *Economics of Natural Resources and the Environment*. Harvester Wheatsheaf. Great Britain.
- Peterson, J. and Bomberg, E., 1999. *Decision-making in the European Union*. Palgrave. New York.
- Proops, J., 2001. *The (non-) economics of the nuclear fuel cycle: an historical and discourse analysis*. Ecological Economics, 39: 13-19.
- Purvis, A., 2003. *The price of pork chop*. The Observer, 13 April.
- Rhodes, R. A. W., 1997. *Understanding Governance: Policy Networks, Governance, Reflexivity and Accountability*. Open University Press. Buckingham.
- Ricardo, D., 1817. *On the principles of political economy and taxation*, publ. 1971. Penguin Books. Harmondsworth.
- Richardson, T., 2000. *Discourses of Rurality in EU Spatial Policy: The European Spatial Development Perspective*. Sociologia Ruralis, Vol. 40, No. 1, January, 53-71.
- Sabatier, P., 1998. *The Advocacy Coalition Framework: Revisions and Relevance for Europe*. Journal of European Public Policy, 5, 1: 98-130.

- Sabatier, P., 1987. *Knowledge, Policy-oriented Learning, and Policy Change*. Knowledge: Creation, Diffusion, Utilisation, 8/4: 649-62.
- Said, E., 1978. *Orientalism. Western Conceptions of the Orient*. Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd. England.
- Saussure, F., 1910. *Third Course of Lectures on General Linguistics (1910-1911)*, publ. 1993. Pergamon Press.
- Scharpf, F., 1988. *The Joint-decision Trap: Lessons from German Federalism and European Integration*. Public Administration, 66, 3: 239-78.
- Smith, A., 1776. *An Inquiry into the nature and causes of the wealth of nations*, publ. 1976. General editors: Campbell, R. H. and Skinner, A. S.; textual editor: Todd, W. B. Clarendon. Oxford.
- Stäheli, U., 2000. *Poststrukturalistische Soziologien*. Transkript Verlag. Bielefeld. Germany.
- Surel, Y., 2000. *The role of cognitive and normative frames in policy-making*. Journal of European Public Policy, 7:4, October: 495-512.
- Tàbara, J.D., Costejà, M. and van Woerden, F., 2004. *Las culturas del agua en la prensa española. Los marcos culturales en la comunicación sobre el Plan Hidrológico Nacional*, In Press, Corrected Proof, Papers. Revista de Sociologia.
- The Economist, 2001. *From bad to worse, down on the farm*. 3 March: 27-28.
- Tietenberg, T., 2001. *Environmental Economics and Policy*. Addison Wesley Longman. Boston.
- Trewavas, A., 2002. *Malthus foiled again and again*. Nature, Vol. 418, 8 August: 668-670.
- Trewavas, A., 1999. *Much food, many problems*. Nature, Vol. 402, 18 November: 231-232.
- United Nations, 1992. *United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. Agenda 21*. Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June.
- Wetherell, M., Taylor, S. and Yates, S., 2001. *Discourse theory and practice: A reader*. Sage. London.
- Winterson, J., 2001. *Cheap Food – The Real Price*. The Guardian, 6 March.